HAVE YOU SEEN MY PAPA? In Cebu City, Angel Kate Laurente, 4, holds up a picture of her father, Jonnel, a crew member. MLTDU

WORLD / A25
Fair Zimbabwe polls impossible, says UN Security Council

BUSINESS / B1
BSP unloads dollars to halt peso slide

NEWS / A2
WB: Corruption in RP perceived worst in East Asia

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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'Frank' kills 361; gov't estimates damage at ₱4.3B

By Michael Lim Ubac, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Nikko Dizon and Amy R. Remo

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES YESTERDAY initially pegged at ₱4.272 billion the damage to crops and infrastructure caused by Typhoon "Frank" even as an opposition senator warned that the rice price crisis could worsen because of the destruction of expected harvests this year.

The provisional death toll from the typhoon, which triggered disastrous floods in the Visayas region, has soared to 361,

FRANK, A-17

Divers find only death inside ferry

A miracle if there are survivors, says Navy

By Tarra Quismundo
on Sibuyan Island
and Leila B. Salaverria
and Nikko Dizon in Manila

DIVERS YESTERDAY SLITHERED through broken windows and found a grisly scene of bodies, some still strapped in life vests, floating inside air pockets in the upturned ferry Princess of the Stars that became their watery grave after it sank in the midst of a raging typhoon three days ago.

"It will be a miracle if we find survivors," said Lt. Cmdr. Innocencio Rosario Jr. who led a team of Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and Philippine Navy divers that went inside the

DIVERS, A-9

WHAT THE DIVERS SAW (Right) Navy and Coast Guard divers finally get inside the overturned Princess of the Stars and find only the depths of darkness and bodies wearing life vests floating head up. (Below) A mere 300 yards separates the shore from the site of the tragedy that happened Saturday off the coast of Sibuyan Island in Romblon. AP, PDI

Sulpicio told: 'Don't give us false hopes!'

By Jerome Aning

"DON'T SPEAK AS THOUGH YOU'RE hoping our relatives with your money."

"Don't give us false hopes!"

It was as though Edgardo Go, president of Sulpicio Lines Inc., had absorbed the wrath of an entire nation shaken by the fourth major disaster involving Sulpicio ships.

SULPICIO, A-8

Young sailors use experience to save selves, others

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THEY BOARDED THE SHIP AS ORDINARY passengers, not knowing they would later need to use their experience as seafarers to save themselves and others.

Amid the chaos and panic that enveloped the sinking ferry Princess of the Stars, a group of young sailors, mostly from Cebu, put up a brave front and did what they were trained to do in emergency situations.

"We had to have the presence of mind to save ourselves and assist the other passengers at the same time," said Jose Mari Garbo, a 22-year-old native of Liloan, Cebu, said in Filipino.

Garbo and 11 other seamen were presented yesterday to the media at the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) office in Manila.

They were part of the group of 25 survivors that miraculously washed ashore in Mulanay, Quezon, nearly 24 hours after a powerful typhoon sank the ferry with more than 800 people aboard on Saturday.

Garbo, who has been a seafarer for the last two years, said he and his colleagues had to take the initiative and

YOUNG, A-9

'Uncoupled' CFC battle over name

By Kristine L. Alave

TWO CATHOLIC LAY GROUPS that sprang from a split in Couples for Christ last year are battling each other for the use of the CFC name.

The fight over the CFC brand between the CFC-Foundation for Family and Life (CFC-FFL), which is headed by Frank Padilla, and the CFC-International Council (CFC-IC), which works with Tony Meloto and Gerard Rallonga, came to a head early this month after the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) lifted the 2003 revocation order on the use of the name Couples for Christ Foundation Inc.

UNCOUPLED, A-13

LIKE SHE NEVER LEFT HOME President Arroyo briefs Philippine media about search/rescue/relief efforts back home in the wake of deadly Typhoon "Frank" in Washington. With her (from left) are Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Press Secretary Jesus Dureza. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

GMA gets US flag as sympathy gesture

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

WASHINGTON, (VIA PLDT) —The US Congress on Monday hoisted the American flag in sympathy for the victims of the ferry that capsized off Sibuyan Island in Romblon at the height of Typhoon "Frank."

The flag of the day was later given to President Macapagal-Arroyo by US lawmakers in an unusual ceremony on the first day of the Washington leg of her 10-day working visit.

The sympathy gesture was made hours after Deputy State Secretary John Negroponte announced after a meeting with Ms Arroyo that a US Navy search-and-rescue vessel and a reconnaissance plane had been dispatched to the Philippines in a race against time to find surviving passengers of the MV Princess of the Stars.

Ms Arroyo-Ind just conferred the Order of the Golden Heart (rank of Grand Cross) on four US lawmakers—Sen. Daniel Akaka, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Representatives Darrel Issa and Bob Filner, key proponents of the Veterans Equity Bill that would benefit Filipino war veterans—when the surprise gift was presented to her.

The conferment ceremony was held during an elegant dinner hosted by Ms Arroyo in honor of the US lawmakers on Mon-

GMA GIFTS, A-9

GMA 'junket': Like fiddling as Rome burns

IN EFFECT IT'S LIKE FIDDLING while Rome burns.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is drawing heavy flak for continuing her "junket" in the United States instead of heading home to help her people cope with tragedy.

In a text message, Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said the President was being "insensitive" to the widespread damage wrought by Typhoon "Frank" by choosing to stay abroad while Philippine officials are ordinary folk scrambled to pick up the pieces.

Lacson said Ms Arroyo and her party, made up virtually of her en-

GMA JUNKET, A-9

Church, experts blame mining, logging for flash floods

By Kristine L. Alave and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

MOUNTAINS STRIPPED OF forests to make way for mining and logging operations have left low-lying cities and towns at the mercy of rampaging floods during heavy rains, according to Church leaders and environment experts.

This, they said, could explain the sudden, heavy flooding brought about by Typhoon "Frank" when it pummeled the Visayas, particularly Iloilo province, and Mindanao over the weekend, killing almost 300 people.

"We have been advocating [against mining and illegal logging] because the mountains are getting bare. They cannot hold water anymore," Iloilo Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), told the Church-owned Radio Veritas yesterday.

The widespread destruction should serve as the Arroyo administration's "wake-up call" against mining and logging,

CHURCH, A-8

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

SUERTRES
6 4 6 | 2 4 5 | 2 6 7
6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
4 8 11 14 21 33
P7,723,251.00
POWERLOTTO 5/55 + 1/18
4 16 27 28 33 + 8
P50,000,000.00

WORLD BANK STUDY

RP corruption worst in E. Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

CORRUPTION IN THE PHILIPPINES is perceived to be the worst among East Asia's leading economies and the country has sunk even lower among those seen to be lagging in governance reforms, a World Bank study suggested.

The bank's 2008 Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), based on new research released yesterday, showed that many developing countries were making important gains in controlling corruption, and some even matched rich-country performance in overall governance measures.

The Philippines, however, was not among them.

The country is now at the bottom of the list of East Asia's 10 largest economies when it comes to control of corruption, edged out by Indonesia which scored the worst in the region in the previous year's survey.

Out of the bottom

Indonesia this year pulled itself out of the world's bottom 25 percent measured in terms of perceived corruption incidences. (See chart.)

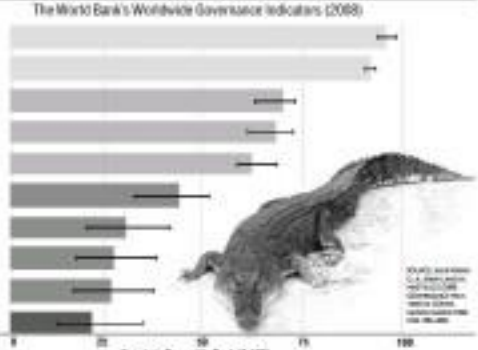
The Philippines' percentile rank for corruption, one of the six key governance indicators used in the research, fell to 22 percent, from 23 percent last year.

Percentile rank indicates the percentage of the 212 countries studied that rate below the rank of a specific country. Higher values would indicate better governance ratings. Thus, the Philippines only ranks higher than 22 percent of the countries surveyed.

The index on control of corruption was defined by the study as "the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as capture of the state by elites and private interests."

CONTROL OF CORRUPTION IN EAST ASIA'S 10 TOP ECONOMIES

The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (2008)



Best performers

The best performers in the region were Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea, all in other major Southeast Asian neighbors and China scored better than the Philippines.

Of the six governance indicators, the Philippines scored lowest—below the 25 percentile— in "control of corruption" and "political stability."

It scored highest in "government effectiveness" and "regulatory quality," values in percentage rank was above 50 percent.

Aside from control of corruption, the five other governance indicators used in the study were: voice and accountability (the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association and a free media); political stability and absence of violence/terrorism (the likelihood that the government will be destabilized by unconstitutional or violent means, including terrorism); government effectiveness (the quality of public services, the capacity of the civil service and its independence from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation); regulatory quality (the ability of the government to provide sound policies and regulations that enable and promote private sector development); and rule of law (the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, including the quality of contract enforcement and property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence).

Seventh update

This year's study is the seventh update of the WGI, a decade-long effort started in 1996 to build and update the most comprehensive cross-country set of governance indicators currently available.

The WGI is used by policymakers and civil society groups worldwide to assess governance challenges and monitor reforms, and by scholars researching the causes and consequences of good governance.

Daniel Kaufmann, co-author of the report and director of governance at the World Bank Institute, said the data showed a large variation in performance across countries, and even among neighbors within each continent.

"Progress reflects reforms in those countries where political leaders, policymakers, civil society and the private sector view good governance and corruption control as crucial for sustained and shared growth," Kaufmann said.

Over a dozen emerging countries, including Slovenia, Chile, Botswana, Estonia, Uruguay, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Mauritius, and Costa Rica, scored higher on key governance indicators than industrialized countries such as Greece or Italy. In many cases, the differences were statistically significant.

Worldwide respondents

Coinciding with countries that have done well, a similar number have experienced deterioration in several governance dimensions, including Zimbabwe, Cote d'Ivoire, Belarus, Yemen and Venezuela.

This year's WGI covered 212 countries and territories, drawing on 35 different data sources to capture the views of tens of thousands of survey respondents worldwide, as well as thousands of experts in survey institutes, think tanks, nongovernment organizations and international organizations.

Research over the past decade showed that improved governance could boost development, and not the other way around. When governance is improved by one standard deviation, infant mortality declines by two-thirds and income rise about three-fold in the long run, he said.

"Until the mid-1990s, I did not think that governance could be measured. The Worldwide Governance Indicators have shown me otherwise" said Shlomo Yitzhaki, Director of Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics and Professor of Economics in the Hebrew University.

"It transforms the state of the art up here to build periodic governance indicators which can be a central tool for policy analysis and decision makers benchmarking their countries. It definitely sets a standard for transparency in data," said Yitzhaki.

SC to convene summit to help poor get justice

By Lala B. Salaverria

FUND

THE SUPREME COURT IS SPEARHEADing a multi-sectoral gathering focusing on how to help poor people get access to justice and protect their rights, similar to the conference it organized last year to address the issue of extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances.

The "Forum on Increasing Access to Justice: Bridging Gaps and Removing Roadblocks" will be held simultaneously in three venues in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao from June 30 to July 3. Participants will be linked through videoconferencing.

The forum intends to gather input directly from those members of society who find it difficult to participate in the judicial process and from stakeholders of the justice system, the high court said in a statement.

It said it expects to learn about the concerns of the poor and what their recommendations might seem to make for the judicial system to become more responsive, fair and friendly to those who do not have money, power or influence.

The participants will include representatives of the poor and members of non-government organizations. There will also be several speakers at the event, including those from government agencies and the academe, diplomatic corps and donor organizations have likewise been invited.

The forum was initially planned for last March but had to be moved because the justices' date was taken up with many important cases.

In an interview last February, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said the aim was to level the playing field and provide relief to the poor, farmers, fishermen, women and children who are victims of violence in their communities where political leaders, policymakers, civil society and the private sector view good governance and corruption control as crucial for sustained and shared growth," Kaufmann said.

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VEEP IN CHARGE
With the President away, Vice President Noli de Castro takes charge in the relief and rescue operations in the wake of Typhoon "Frank" which left a trail of destruction in the Visayas and Luzon over the weekend. In Romblon, De Castro holds a press conference with some survivors, local leaders and rescue and relief officials. (DM ALCANTARA)

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Lozada's wife posts bail for perjury case

By Allison W. Lopez

GAUGHT UNAWARES THAT AN arrest warrant had already been issued against her, the wife of NBN-ZTE whistleblower Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada yesterday posted a ₱6,500 bail at the Metropolitan Trial Court of Manila for a perjury case filed against her.

Violet Lozada, who was charged with perjury by the Philippine National Police, said she only learned that a warrant for her arrest was issued on June 13 when she went to the sala of Judge Marlo Magpat of MTC Branch 5 yesterday afternoon.

Around 12 p.m. Atty. Ely Pamatong called me because he received a resolution that the perjury charges had been elevated to the court. So I went with him to Branch 5 to personally serve motions, pero just pala meron na [but it turned out there was already one]," she told the Inquirer.

When pounded her, added Violet, was that the resolution was sent to the wrong lawyer because her counsel for the perjury case was Carlos Medina of the Action Human Rights Center.

Pamatong also received the resolution dated May 29 only yesterday or three weeks after it was issued, she said. Violet said she had no choice but to post bail because the warrant was already there.

"I felt very bad about this that I had to undergo these things, because we didn't do anything wrong," she said, adding that she cried while having shots and fingerprints were being taken.

Sought for comment, Atty. Lozada said he believed the issuance of an arrest warrant was kept from them on purpose so his wife can be arrested "surprise."

"The process is not being followed. Dito ang kilu-kilo familiar [here they are very quick in take action] but the kidnapping case and the sale of airports na'ko filed at the DOJ have yet to be acted upon," he said.

The Lozadas said their next step would be to file a motion for reconsideration in the hope that the case would be junked by the court.

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Hanjin blamed for death

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—THE DEATH OF A Filipino worker at the Hanjin construction site here last week may have been caused by the company's failure to inform its workers that they are barred from entering restricted areas, according to a report of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

The report, which listed the potential causes for liability of the Hanjin Construction Corp., also said the Korean company failed to provide rest areas and check-ins for workers.

Marvin Herrera, 32, of Candelaria, Zambales, was killed while five other workers were injured when they were hit by steel beams that collapsed because of strong winds last Friday.

"The site safety officer must be strict in the implementation of safety rules and regulations," the report said.

The incident occurred at Dry Dock 4 of the Hanjin shipyard "in an area where steel beams [and] kicker forms [used for dry dock retaining walls were being assembled and dismantled."

The six workers were part of a group that was working in the area. When the heavy rains started, the six rushed to seek shelter under the steel frames.

But a sudden gust of wind caused the collapse of the frames, fatally hitting Herrera and injuring his five companions.

Penang Eng Fu, the Hanjin general manager, said Herrera's death was caused by "force majeure [an unexpected and disruptive event that may operate to excuse a party from a contract] and not by negligence of the company.

"Most accidents [at the Hanjin shipyard] can be attributed to human error. But we are actively implementing safety programs. Hanjin is implementing safety requirements more than the law requires," Fu said in an earlier interview.

SBMA administrator Armand Arreza said the labor department and the SBMA are conducting a follow-up audit and would be submitting their recommendations to the SBMA board.

Arreza earlier described the safety situation at the shipyard as "alarming."

He said Hanjin has been told to complete all occupational health and safety requirements within 30 days.

"Otherwise, we will suspend their operations, not just the construction activities but also the shipyard operations," he said.

The Korean shipbuilder's Subic facility is an $11.6 billion (the single biggest foreign investment in the country.

But since it set up its dry docks here last year, Hanjin has been struck by a string of health hazard cases and accidental deaths and injuries.

After the latest incident, the SBMA ordered a stop to Hanjin's construction operations.

Robert Ormaguin, Inquirer Central Luzon

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marie france

YIZHANGIE autographs a copy of his book "Martial Law Diary" during its launch in 2002 with his grandchildren on the same occasion (right) photo

Ka Dan, original rebel soldier, dies at 79

By DJ Yap

"HE WAS THE ORIGINAL rebel soldier."

The words were said in tribute to Danilo "Ka Dan" Vizmanos, retired military officer turned political activist, one month before he died Monday night at the age of 79.

Vizmanos had fought martial law and crusaded against the United States military bases in the Philippines, among other pariotic causes.

A Navy captain, he had joined the dissident movement, blazing a trail for others like him in the military establishment.

Upon the declaration of martial law in 1972, Vizmanos retired from the service, citing "incompatibility with an armed Forces that was reoriented into a huge private army and oppressive instrument of the Marcos dictatorship."

He was incarcerated for more than two years at Camp Crame, Fort Bonifacio and Bicutan with no formal charges filed.

While in detention, he was subjected to physical and psychological torture, including being injured with "truth serum," in an effort to get him to betray his friends in the resistance movement.

His mind was slowly giving up but I still had control," he had recalled.

In May, a month before he died, his family, friends and comrades paid tribute to him in a special ceremony at the University of Makati.

"Ka Dan is the original rebel soldier," Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said then.

Openness, enthusiasm

"The admirable qualities of Ka Dan were his openness to new and radical ideas, enthusiasm in making everyone understand and empower, (his) leadership," said Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo at the ceremony.

Rallied communist leader Jose Ma. Sison sent a recorded tribute: "We and all his countrymen take pride in Ka Dan Vizmanos, great hero and true soldier of the people."

At the end of the two hour tribute, highlighted by an emotional rendition of "Buen Lunasang" by his grandchildren, an ever-whelmed Vizmanos fought back tears.

"I can never forget this night," he said. "This is the first time I have felt so honored."

Vizmanos died of complications arising from a bout of silvestris, including cancer of the prostate, his daughter Diane said.

"He had gone increasingly frail the past month," she said. "It's over and but at least he is no longer suffering."

Vizmanos is survived by four children, Diane, Irwin, Alice and Danny, and 11 grandchildren, A.G., Joseph, Dessa, Veron, Angelique, Japeth, Shem, Carolyn, Kevin, Vince, Dominoh and Jeremiah.

His body lies at the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Don Eleven in Makati City.

Celebrate life

Diane said her father, otherwise strong and robust, had suddenly become weak in 2000 after the death of his wife, Alicia.

"After she died, my father lost his will to live. He would always be in a melancholy mood," she said in Pilipino.

Diane said the family would rather celebrate their father's life than mourn his death. "We lived a full life and devoted it to the Filipino people ... he's my idol," she said in an interview.

After he was cremated, Vizmanos said he left the "reactionary organization" that was the military to become a "militant activist."

He has almost four decades, he assumed leadership positions in left-to organizations like Bayan, Anakbayan ng mga Ex-Detainee Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya, Kilos Foundation and Philippine-Cuba Friendship Association.

Testified vs Marcos

In 1992, he testified in the US Federal District Court of Hawaii about the atrocities committed during the Marcos dictatorship. The same court would later hold Marcos liable for human rights violations.

Vizmanos authored three books, "Through the Eye of the Storm," "Martial Law Diary" and "A Matter of Conviction." His writings were described as "a critique of a social order that has retained the country in its colonial moorings and perpetuated social injustice."

Diane said she was glad her father experienced being held in such high esteem before he died.

"It's as though his life had become complete. He had done everything he set out to do," she said.

Casiño bill to let poor suspects free without posting bail

By Norman Bordadora

RADDY MUJA BERTUDOMO CASIÑO has filed a bill that will allow a person accused of a crime but who cannot afford to post bail to be released in the custody of a respected person in the community.

House Bill 5389 or the Recognizance Act of 2008 is the enabling law for a two-decade-old constitutional right to be "released on recognizance," said the activist lawmaker.

Casiño was joined by party-list colleagues Satur Ocampo and 10 other legislators on filing the landmark bill "to correct one of the long standing grey areas in the country's criminal justice system."

"The 1987 constitution actually allows two modes by which a person may be released temporarily from detention—bail and recognizance. But it was left to Congress to come up with the enabling law for this provision, Casiño said.

Restorative justice

The Constitution's Article III, Section 13 mandates "All persons, except those charged with offenses punishable by reclusion perpetua when evidence of guilt is strong, shall, before conviction, be bailable by sufficient sureties, or be released on recognizance as may be provided by law."

Casiño said the intent of the framers of the Charter was to extend the frontiers of the criminal justice system "in the spirit of restorative justice," Casiño added.

"Bail is a most preferred option by rich litigants. But this is one the ones for thousands of poor litigants who cannot afford the services of competent lawyers and who do not have the means to post bail," Casiño said.

In the Metro Manila alone in 2007, records show that at least 13,363 inmates were qualified to post bail but could not do so, he added.

Recognizance

His bill defines recognizance as an obligation of record entered into before a judge, wherein the accused pledges to appear during trial.

"Bayan Muna and the bill's co-authors hope that this would give the community a bigger and more proactive role in releasing suspected offenders and upholding a fair system of justice," he added.

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No P15-M ransom for Ces, says Sulu cop chief

By Alexis Pupa

THE SULU POLICE COMMANDER YESTERDAY denied any knowledge of a second ransom of P15 million having been paid for the release of the ABS-CBN news team headed by Ces Drilon that was abducted in the province earlier this month.

"I don't have any knowledge of that. I did not receive any duffel bags. Those bags would have been big," Senior Supt. Alberto Caoile told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

The Inquirer last Saturday reported that a second ransom of P15 million was paid to the kidnappers.

This was based on the affidavit of police intelligence officer Supt. Wilmito Quidato who had managed to join undercover the negotiating team headed by Tubaran Mayor Alvarez Israji.

Quidato, in his statement, said that on June 17, Haider "Jun" Israji, the mayor's son, called him to say the second ransom being delivered by Sulu Board Member Jimmy Yumasit was being held by Rasiri.

Money returned

Later, Quidato said, he met with Yumasit and Rasiri. "The money was returned by the provincial director (Rasiri) to the mayor and his lawyer (Yumasit)."

The Inquirer also managed to photocopy a Saudi plane landing at Jolo airport from which Yumasit disembarked and two duffel bags were all loaded.

But Rasiri stressed yesterday that he was only instructed to "hold" Yumasit. He said he did not know the reason for this and he would not say who had told him to do so.

"There was no turnover of any money or any duffel bag. I just invited Yumasit to deplane and the aircraft was under the jurisdiction of aviation security," Rasiri said.

Later that day at around 8 p.m., Rasiri said he dropped Yumasit off at the home of Mayor Israji.

"The only reason that I know of was the one shown on TV being counted," Rasiri said, referring to the initial P5 million paid.

Asked about the duffel bags last week, PNP Director General Avelino Razon had said Rasiri was to be questioned about it.

But Rasiri said no one had questioned him so far.

An investigator from the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), however, said Rasiri had already been questioned but his statements "were just going around and around."

The Israjis' lawyer, Firdausi Abbas, claimed the other day a second P15-million ransom was paid for the release of Drilon, her cameramen Jimmy Encarnacion and Angelo Valeriano, and producer Ocnarc Olmedo, their guide.

Abbas said the ransom was put up by a Chinese-Filipino businessman he would not identify.

Abbas also claimed ABS-CBN gave P5 million while Drilon's family coughed up another P5 million for the initial P5 million ransom paid to the kidnappers.

The TV network has denied paying ransom, stressing it had a no-ransom policy.

Also last week, Rasiri said P5 million was paid but the Israjis pocketed P3 million.

Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu, an uncle of Drilon's, confirmed the family paid P5 million.

The CIDG has filed charges of kidnapping for ransom against the Israjis, saying the father and son had participated in the kidnapping.

Both have denied the charges, saying they were only out to help obtain the release of the captives.

Kidnapper's images

Interrogators, meanwhile, said they had in their possession video footage taken of the kidnappers and text messages of the Israjis that would implicate them.

"When the kidnappers weren't looking, the cameras were turned on. So we have most, if not all, of their faces," said the interrogator, who spoke on condition of anonymity for lack of authority to speak.

The Inquirer also got the text message purportedly sent by Haider to the kidnappers using Drilon's cell phone.

The message translated from Tausug read: The P500 is here with us. There is no news about the thing you told us from Manila. Tell us if you change your decision, if you agree give us the 3 (captives). Be careful because the Marines are roaming. The Marines are ready for your deadline. If you would like more, no, let's not extend this to tomorrow. This has to end today so you call (for sale)."

SURVIVORS

Police Deputy Director General Jesus Verzosa, deputy chief of the Philippine National Police for administration (left), and Police Director Leopoldo Bataoil, director of the PNP directorate for police community relations, inspect the injuries sustained by some of the survivors of MV Princess of the Stars of Sulpicio Lines, which sank in the perilous waters of Tablas Strait off Sibuyan Island in Romblon province amidst the early Sunday morning storm. Verzosa and Bataoil rushed to San Fernando town in Romblon to get updates of the ongoing search and rescue operations being conducted by police and military personnel. Some of the survivors were given shelter at the town's police station.

CORAL TRIANGLE INITIATIVE

Environmentalist Luli makes mama proud

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

WASHINGTON, DC (VM, PLDT)—Hidilyn Diaz Mirasgapay Arroyo was a pioneer of a proud mother as she talked about her only daughter's involvement in conservation work as a conference of environmental groups.

The President's busy schedule in Washington included a luncheon with the Coral Triangle Initiative, a multilateral network that includes the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Island and Timor Leste, at the Willard Inter-Continental Hotel here on Monday.

She shared the table in the front of the hall with Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, World Wildlife Fund CEO Carter Roberts, The Nature Conservancy acting CEO Stephanie Meaden and other officials, while her daughter Evangeline (Luli) sat at the last table.

Mrs Arroyo said she was "thrilled at this morning."

"It is time when so many things seem to be going wrong in the world, this event demonstrates what is going right," she said.

"We have men and women from all walks of life and organizations, public, private and government coming together to make the world of better place.

"We believe in the Coral Triangle Initiative, and we just because our daughter Luli—sorry not over there—is a dedicated environmentalist and works for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)."

Mrs Arroyo said the also had the deep conviction that environment conservation should not take a back seat to economic development.

"There is no reason that job creation and a good, sound, clean environmental policy cannot coexist. The Coral Triangle Initiative is

LULI ARROYO

proud position that the sustainable environmental model is not only possible. It is also necessary and we are going to make sure it happens," she said.

The President again expressed a mother's pride in her child.

"We are proud of what we are trying to do today for her. And as a parent, I'm deeply proud that Luli has sought to spend her life working with the WWF and making sure the preserves God's gift of the Coral Triangle, a perpetual blessing for the people of the archipelago and the world."

The Arroyo family is in full force here for the President's trip. Aside from Luli, she is accompanied by her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, their sons, Dionguardia Rep. Jose Miguel Arroyo and Camarines Sur Rep. Diosdado Arroyo, daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

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Corrections

IN THE JUNE 17 ISSUE, an article on Page A2—"Where's commercial basin, 23 employees ask"—misspelled the first name of the University of the Philippines president. Her name is Emerlinda... not Erlinda...Roman.

* * *

IN THE JAMES ISSUE, an ad of the Civil Service Commission—"2006 search for outstanding public officials and employees: most Realists"—misstated the name of one of the Dumlocrid Lingkod Bayan Award recipients in the Group/Category. The name of the group is UP Manila-School of Health Sciences...not Sciences.

* * *

IN THE JUNE 21 ISSUE, an article on Page A2—"Kidnapped pool members why their pilots was not charged"—misstated the rank of Jonathan Tolibao of the Philippine Marine Corps. Tolibao is a major general—not a brigadier general. The same mistake also appeared in previous stories.

* * *

THE DAILY STAR also misstated the name of the university where kidnapping victim Genesis Empaynado teaches. Empaynado is a professor at Mindanao State University...not Western Mindanao University.

* * *

IN THE JUNE 24 ISSUE, an article on Page C1 of the Lifestyle section—"Healing by light"—mistakenly printed the wrong contact numbers for Point of Light Wellness Center. The center may be reached through 485-3156—not 485-3166—and 895-7887 loc. 181—not 895-3001 loc. 181. The Inquirer apologizes for the inconvenience the error has caused.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Inq Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-ds Street, Makati City, fax No. 897-47-93, e-mail address: dailyinq@inquirer.com.ph

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ARMM polls an acid test for Comelec, says Melo

By Kristine L. Alave

NOTED THAT THE AUTONOMOUS Region in Muslim Mindanao polls in August would be an acid test for the Commission on Elections, in their first Mindanao visit Monday the Comelec en banc working double time to ensure clean, honest and peaceful elections.

Melo said there was a groundswell of support from ARMM residents. "What we have now is an awakened citizenry. Awakened and vigilant. For every person who doubts us, I think there are 10 people who want the ARMM elections to succeed," he told election watchdog volunteers yesterday in a summit sponsored by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) in Manila.

Melo, whose appointment was recently confirmed by the Commission on Appointments, said the Comelec was working closely with civil society groups and law enforcement to make sure there would be no hitches in the regional elections.

"So far, 13 ARMM polls will be the first to be fully automated in the country. It promises to spare the public the long wait for results and remove external human intervention to curb vote manipulation.

The automated ARMM elections is also seen as a dry run for the 2007 national polls.

The Comelec, PPCRV and various Muslim groups signed a memorandum of agreement yesterday to keep the ARMM elections free from cheating and violence.

Melo, PPCRV head Henrietta de Villa, Datul Ibu Kamel Abdi Abdul Wahid Iqin and representatives of 16 Bangsamoro civil society organizations also vowed to pursue electoral reforms in the region.

"The military and police hierarchy on their respective areas pledged their support that the Aug. 11 automated elections in the ARMM have a fighting chance to be free," De Villa said.

Security tops the list of concerns in the regional elections, Melo noted.

He expressed fears that the military operation is only in the aftermath of the kidnapping of a television news crew and a peace adviser would result in the loss because of voters.

One of seven ARMM candidates for governor, Sultanate Mayor Abusrin Imlal, was tagged as the mastermind of the kidnapping, running fears of tension and hostilities in the region.

Melo said he hoped the military would capture the abductors before the elections.

He said the Comelec would not suspend the elections to fade despite military activities.

He also said the poll body will only declare failure of elections on Election Day.

Across foreign-election observers, Melo said it was up to the military and the police to decide whether or not to allow members to go to polls, stressing that the area was risky.

There are about 1.6 million voters in the ARMM, which consists of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Shariff Kabsuman, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan provinces.

Stories to see and how the remarks. Here's why your after pass, are important, articles and photographers have been recognized by the most prestigious journalistic groups.

INQUIRER

Dare to ask. We are Inquirers.

GMA 'junket': Like fiddling as Rome burns

Barangay A1
dro Cabinet and a good number of members of the House of Representatives, should have immediately returned in view of the high death toll in the sinking of the MV Princess of the Stars.

"We need her more here. She is supposed to be the mother of this country. She should have been in solidarity with the surge in prices of fuel and food that had been burdening the public.

Bobby Jopillo, vice governor of land-rich Iloilo, said all the representatives of the province's five congressional districts and Iloilo City's lone deaner...Arthur Defensor, Federal Steve, Jeanette Garin, Judy Syjuco, Mel Tapan, Jo and Raul Gonzalez Jr., were on the ground helping out.

"We, all are here except PGMA (Ms Arroyo). We need a leader. I urge her to cut short her trip and return to the Philippines as soon as possible," Jopillo said.

"We need a visible, working leader at this crucial time," he said.

Pacquiao

Lacson said that even without the typhoon damage and sea disaster, Ms Arroyo should have been sensitive to the surge in prices of fuel and food that had been burdening the public.

Lacson said the government's efforts to cut costs...such as the roads criticized decision to move the Independence Day holiday to June 9 from June 12—had all been just to soothe the sensitivities of the "lords" spending for the huge delegation accompanying the President.

Members of the delegation have come under fire because of their avowed intention to hop off to Las Vegas and watch Filipino boxing champion Manny Pacquiao in action on Saturday (Sunday in Manila).

The radiant Regina Alcantara Maddaraan (Bayani Mo, Kapuso) is working visa in the United States was "too outrageous and outrageous."

"In a time of severe economic crisis and calamity, government must take the lead in practicing austerity. What we are seeing with the Arroyo administration is the exact opposite. Having 39 congressmen, one senator and 10 Cabinet secretaries on a foreign trip doesn't do the country any good. If anything, it is the height of insensitivity," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. fight.

"When you think of how your people are being squeezed by the value-added tax while government officials can take junkets just like that, you just feel outraged. Just how many of these consumers can afford to go to such a trip? Only those who are close to the UP to watch the Pacquiao fight! How many are planning to come home immediately to attend to their constituents?" Reyes said.

In an e-mailed statement, Bayan-USA chair Chito Quijano said a "rapid action delegation" of progressive activists of Ms Arroyo is the alone that she would visit and raise the issues of corruption, human rights violations and the US military presence in the Philippines.

"Ms Arroyo's appalling record of human rights violations continues to be marked by the rise of extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances," Quijano said.

Embarrassment

But leaders of the House continued to defend the trip of the President and her party as this critical time.

Speaker Prospero Nograles said the congressmen who joined the trip were using their own funds and their own time to be with Ms Arroyo in Washington and New York.

Speaking in the same vein, House Majority Leader Arthur Defensor said it would be embarrassing if Ms Arroyo canceled the trip that had been scheduled as early as several months back.

"It's too late for the President to back out. If the President cancels out, it would be a national embarrassment. This is not an ordinary trip," Defensor said.

In a text message to the listeners from the United States, Nograles said: "The trip of President (Gloria was long scheduled, the storm (called Frank) had no scheduled arrival.

"All the congressmen who may have dined (their vacation) with the President's schedule are on their own personal time and expense and (are) not spending public funds. They are here to lobby for more Congress is on now the adjournment."

Nograles said he had been informed that no House funds were released for the congressmen's accommodations and airfare.

He stressed that he flew to the United States on his own funds.

Asked whether the representation of congressional doctors hand-hit by Frank should cut their trip and hurry home, Nograles said, "First line of defense are local officials. Congressmen just look for national funds to help out."

Missing the point

In a subsequent text message, command through his public information staff, Nograles said lawmakers from provinces affected by Frank should indeed go home to "attend to their constituents' needs."

He said he was sure that the lawmakers had "already booked their flight back home."

But in a statement, the Black & White Movement (B&W) said Nograles "missed the point" when he said that the House was on a break and then local officials could handle the situation.

"The President issued a flood of directives to prove she cares every (t)ime's abused, and is jointly her trip. But her directives are mere scraps of paper because none of them, requiring congressional action, can't be extended to. A (quorum) for the House, for example, could be impossible," the B&W said.

"We would think better of those officials if they had been in their districts within hours of the storm, rolling up their sleeves, ready to comfort and aid and organize relief efforts. (Ms Arroyo) could have cancelled the trip and taken the helm," it said, noting that Sen. Richard Gordon "saw what was coming and sensed home to attend to the Red Cross."

Roll call

Answers in the House said among those who made the trip with the President were her son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo and Camarines Sur Rep. Gonzalo Arroyo, and deputy Speaker-Iloilo del Sur at large Loren Legarda, Villamor of Bicolano Occidental.

Also on the dais respective officers and staff confirmed that the others in the delegation were Representatives Rodolfo Seachon Jr. (Bicol), Emilio Bunoy (Quezon), Joseph Santiago (Catanduanes), Teodoro Coquilla (Eastern Samar), Ferdinand Martin Romualdez and Andres Salvador Jr. (both of Leyte) and Nelson Dayanghirang (Davao Oriental).

Not with GMA

Other lawmakers who were on the trip, according to House sources, were Representatives Eleanor Pancorvello (Bicolo) , Anton Lagdameo Jr. (Davao del Sur), Roger Mercado (Southern Leyte), Ferdie Yong Bulaoy), Jose Zubiri III (Bukidnon), Isabel Suebal Asenas (Pangasinan) and Mitch Cajayon-Uy(Iloilo).

Deputy Majority Leader Ramon Bagatsing, Jr. (Manila), Deputy Minority Leader Eduardo Gullas (Cebu), Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar (Cebu), Senator Vicente Sotto III (Metro Manila), Deputy Speaker Ronaldo Zamora (San Juan), Deputy Speaker Jose Solis (Nueva Ecija

Prosecutors want to pursue perjury case vs Erap

By TJ Burgonio

MONTHS AFTER FORMER JOSEPH Estrada was pardoned following his conviction by an outgoing court for plunder, a team of government prosecutors now wants to review his old perjury case against him.

Deputy Special Prosecutors Ruben Ladion and Divina-Luz Raymundo Jalic-Hagad and John I.C. Bonifacio have asked the Sandiganbayan to set the case for trial.

In a June 20 manifestation, they said they were ready to prosecute Criminal Case No. 26564 which stemmed from Estrada's misdeclaration of his April 26, 2000 statement of assets and liabilities.

They said the case was still pending before the First Division and was separate from the perjury case, Criminal Case No. 26905, that was earlier dismissed by the Sandiganbayan Special Division.

"The people are ready, willing and able to continue the prosecution of the case at bar which has not been subject of final resolution by this Honorable Court, First Division, and remains pending herein after arraignment and pretrial," they said.

Acquitted, convicted, pardoned

On Sept. 12 last year, the Sandiganbayan acquitted Estrada of perjury but convicted him of plunder, and ordered the forfeiture of his accounts and properties. He was granted executive clemency by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Oct. 25.

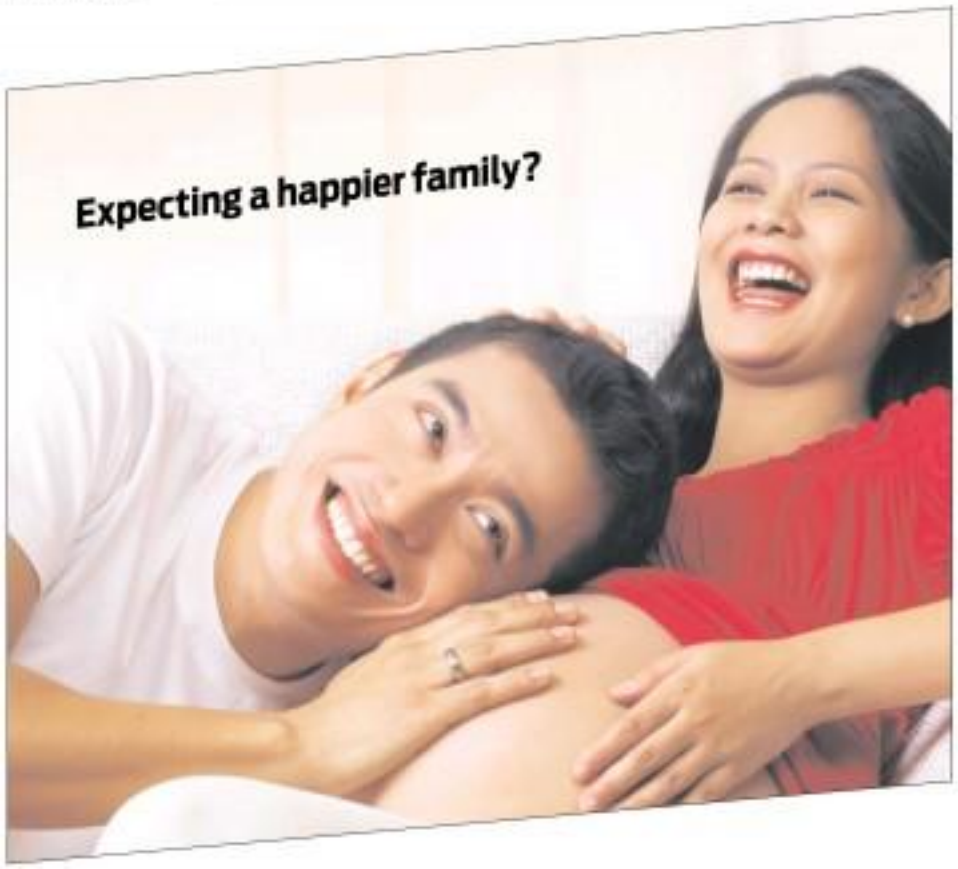
The hearing on Criminal Case No. 26564 was stalled after then Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, chair of the First Division, barred prosecutors from submitting documentary evidence which they failed to list down during the pretrial conference.

The pieces of evidence purportedly contained of bank documents showing that the ousted leader kept rare deposit accounts containing at least P34 million, contrary to his declared net worth of only P33 million.

The prosecutors asked the Supreme Court to reverse the ruling, but the high court dismissed this, saying this had become "moot" after the Sandiganbayan Special Division acquitted Estrada of perjury.

"With all due respect to the Honorable Supreme Court, the case of perjury wherein petitioner Joseph Ejercito Estrada was acquitted by this Honorable Court, Special Division, is Criminal Case No. 26905," the prosecutors said in their manifestation.

"But our opposite from Criminal Case No. 26564, which remains pending before the First Division, they said.



Divers find only death inside sunken ferry

From page A1

vessel's dark corridors and poked terrified eating flashlights.

Our divers spoke of children rolling on the floor as the ship tilted, Barreth reported.

Bonnici's men had to wriggle out three bodies found on the bridge—or the vessel's control room—through passages littered with shattered glass, broken bunks and tattered steel sheets. Two of them were wearing the bulky Coast Guard uniform. One was identified as Romanel Cardoz, who still clutched a hand radio and wore his ID.

"I think there were many more trapped there, but I could not say how many," Bonnici said. "We have not retrieved the passenger accommodation. There are many cabins to look into."

Another PCG diver, Seaman 3/c Donato Brugal, reported to headquarters that "more or less 15 bodies" were entombed in the dining area of the first-class cabins—about 90 feet under water. He said the divers planned to reenter the glass partitions to retrieve the ghastly white bundles.

"Most of the bodies were floating inside. They were trapped when the seven-story ship suddenly tilted and capsized," Philippine Navy spokesperson Lt. Col. Edgard Arevalo said.

"When they tried to enter the vessel, they saw several corpses floating in the air pocket," Arevalo said.

Passengers inside hesitated

Arevalo would not speculate on whether anyone might still be found alive, saying the ship's interior was too dark to even determine how many bodies were there but indicated that the more than 100 missing could be entombed. Lighting sets being brought in.

He said that while some of the bodies had life vests, "it seems the passengers hesitated from jumping in turbulent waters" because "it happened too suddenly," referring to survivors' accounts of the ship quickly listing and going down on its 30-minute maiden voyage.

Arevalo said that with life vests, "you will survive for a few hours, but in time, the air will run out."

Adm. Wilfredo Tamayo, the PCG commandant, said about 20 Coast Guard and Navy divers were at the scene as the weather cleared for the first time, and that the US Navy ship Stockham had arrived with freighters and search-and-rescue helicopters.

Tamayo said the divers had broken windows and used every gap they could find to slip inside the vessel, whose upturned bow was poking out of the now still waters off San Fernando in Romblon Island.

On Tuesday, the divers found no survivors when they hammered on the hull, but officials refused to give up.

How to bring out bodies

Arevalo said the priority now was how to retrieve the bodies. He said options included attaching weights to the bodies and then pulling them out, or cutting the hull—a prospect complicated by a cargo of bunker oil that could leak and turn the frames ragged into an environmental disaster.

The Princess of the Stars sailed from Manila at 8 p.m. on Friday on a normally 23-hour voyage to Cebu City. It was the vessel's maiden voyage and sank around noon Saturday.

The PCG earlier said that the ferry, which was bought by Sulpicio Lines from Japan for $5 million, had 747 passengers and crew aboard, but the figure was revised upward on Monday to 849 based on a supplemental manifest submitted by the company.

Sulpicio Lines, which has a record of four major sea mishaps in two decades, including the 1987 collision between the MV Doña Paz and a tanker that claimed 4,000 lives, said the Princess of the Stars sailed with Coast Guard approval. It said regular, clear advisories issued with over 20,000 gross tons to sail during stormy weather.

The government ordered Sulpicio Lines to suspend activities pending an investigation and a check of its other ships' seaworthiness.

Only 47 survivors found so far

The National Disaster Coordinating Council on Monday said 57 people from the Princess of the Stars either drifted to nearby islands and were rescued, including a group of 28 on a lifeboat that miraculously reached Mulanay town in Quezon province nearly 24 hours after the ferry went under. (Story on Page A1.)

But yesterday, the NDCC revised the number of survivors down to 47, explaining that the others earlier listed were victims of other sea disasters.

The NDCC listed 20 dead from the Princess of the Stars, a figure that did not include the 18 bodies that the divers found yesterday inside the vessel.

At least 53 bodies washed ashore on Bubon Island in Masbate province, according to Office of Civil Defense Director Rudy Alejandro. But he said it was unclear if some of the dead were from the ill-starred ferry or from other fishing boats wrecked by the typhoon.

Divers preparing to go deeper

Speaking via speakerphone to PCG spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo and reporters, Brugal said that as of 3 p.m. yesterday the divers were preparing to descend to about 120 feet to reach the economy section near the tail section of the vessel.

Brugal said the divers found it diffi-

GORDON'S HEROES Rescuer who boarded the Princess of the Stars as passengers are presented and applauded by Red Cross Chair Sen. Dick Gordon on Tuesday for keeping their wits about them and saving themselves as well as 18 others. JOEY DALUMPINES

cult to retrieve the bodies from the dining room because books and torn metal blocked their way. He said the pieces of metal prevented the divers from pushing open the door and they had to smash the glass panel.

Balilo said rescuers were still analyzing how they would locate a hole on the ship's hull. "They are worried that they might hit the fuel tanks," he said.

The PCG will send additional divers to the site today. The US ship is also expected to field 14 divers to the area.

Divers also reported seeing an oil slick in the area, and Balilo said oil spill booms had been readied to prevent any spilled oil from spreading.

"Our mission is to search all the cabins, but it is dark inside," Bonnici told ABS-CBN television. "In the meantime, there is a lot of debris and sharp glass that are hindrances to our job. There are two bars that are sticking out and could stab our divers." With reports from Shannon Sopuerhuela, Inquirer Visayas, Madonna Virola, Inquirer Southern Luzon, Ephraim Aguilar and Romulo Perez, Inquirer Southern Luzon, AP/AFP/Reuters

Oil spill fears complicate rescue work

SAN FERNANDO, ROMBLON Island—Fears of a massive oil spill have complicated efforts to recover bodies from inside a ferry that sank in the Philippines with more than 800 people on board, officials said yesterday.

Although divers found no sign of life when they inspected the capsized Princess of the Stars off coastal Sibuyan Island, Vice President Teofisto Guingona said he was "still hopeful."

At a press conference on the island, De Castro said some people may have survived in an air pocket inside the ship.

"Who knows, we might see a miracle. We will believe in miracles," he said.

But De Castro said one of the problems hampering the recovery operations was fuel leaks from the ferry's tanks.

"If we siphon off the fuel the ferry would tilt and fall over (spilling oil), complicating rescue and recovery efforts further," he said.

Do things correctly

De Castro appealed to the public for patience, saying that the recovery operations "will not be as quick as we thought." "The important thing is we do things correctly," he said.

"If we do it quickly, there might be a bigger disaster," De Castro told reporters after inspecting the rescue operations.

The ferry is sitting upside down on a sand reef off Sibuyan Island with the bottom of the hull exposed above the water.

Reporters on the scene saw oil spill booms being positioned around the ferry as divers began removing bodies.

De Castro said additional diving supplies had been brought in and that they hoped to eventually deploy 40 divers including possibly 18 from a US Navy ship that has joined the rescue efforts. AFP

Young sailors use experience to save selves, others

From page A1

make sense of what was happening around them.

Hose used in escape

Garbo said that his companions, led by seafarer Jay Padin, 31, of Cebu City, pulled out a soiled fire hose and tied it to a steel pole.

The makeshift rope enabled them to reach the other cadets eager to hold on it while the ship was disorganizedly tilting on its left side.

"We knew that the ship was going to sink, considering the condition it was in," Padin said in Filipino. "We had to do what we could."

The seemingly dauntless cadets also had their moments of weakness and fear.

Garbo said that when the ship was starting to sink, he had to plant his forehead in corner himself that he was not dreaming.

Waves high as mountains

"It was then that I realized that I was in a real nightmare," Garbo said, remembering the horrible cries of panic and fear. Cut from both adults and children trapped inside the ship.

Garbo also recalled the waves to be "high as mountains."

"I've been trained to face rough seas, but I've never seen such big waves," he said, shuddering.

"We really had to pray to all of the saints while all that was taking place," he added.

But Garbo said he had to gather his wits and compose himself.

"I think that it was our seafarer training kicking in," Garbo said with a wry grin.

He then recalled holding on to the fire hose and waiting for the ship to sink first before jumping into the water.

Lessons from 'Titanic'

"I learned that from the (movie) 'Titanic,'" Garbo said. "When the passengers in the film started jumping while the ship was still tilted to its side, many hit the railings and died."

Upon reaching the water, Garbo joined 11 of his fellow seafarers in a lifeboat. With them were 10 other passengers.

But, Richard Gordon, the Red Cross chair, was with the survivors when they talked to reporters yesterday.

'I was also scared'

Gordon said that while passenger Vicente Bernas acted to the best "capitalin," the other seafarers organized themselves by performing specific roles such as removing materials out of the lifeboat using their shoes and balancing the craft.

"I was also scared, but when I saw that my companions were horrified of what was happening in them, I tried my best to be strong for them," Bernas said.

For 22 hours, the passengers of the little boat faced the roughest of the sea.

When they were 30 meters away from the Mulanay shore, the boat finally capsized—and claimed the life of one of their companions. Another minute relating.

"We are very thankful to the municipality of Mulanay for helping us," the seafarers said.

Church, experts blame mining, logging for flash floods

From page A1

which the CBCP official cosponsored, "destructive industries" that have led to dwindling forest covers and "unauthorized" do what is happening today."

Experts blamed the severe flooding experienced in Western Mindoro mainly on the continued practice of seven- and the conversion of agricultural lands into subdivisions and commercial areas.

Logs in rushing waters

Jerry Bisnar, executive officer of the Iloilo Provincial Environment Coordinating Council, said logging activities should be investigated because the rushing waters that had inundated entire villages carried logs.

Mayor Isabelo Bingaten of Sta. Barbara town, one of the municipalities surrounding Iloilo, said a morning of the PEEC that the logs crammed into and damaged bridges.

Bisnar also noted that the flooding in many residential areas and those previously unaffected by calamity.

Flooding in Cotabato

Lagdameo's sentiments were echoed by Catabato City Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, who said his diocese and its surrounding villages suffered heavy flooding and mudslides when Tropical Storm Saranggani flowed fast from the mountains.

"There have been many instances of flooding in Mindanao in Sultan Kudarat, which is near Cotabato City, this was the first time they had this kind of flood. Many houses were submerged. This was the first time it happened in many, many years," Bagaforo told Radio Veritas.

He said many loggers were operating in the provinces surrounding Cotabato City. "There are reforested mountains and creeks in Maguindanao and Sharif Kabuntalan provinces that are losing trees. The waters from there send up here in Cotabato City area," Bagaforo explained.

Unprecedented

In a statement on Monday, Lagdameo described the events that inundated his archdiocese in Iloilo City and nearby municipalities as "unexpected" and "unprecedented." The provinces, which are Southeastern Mindanao, losing houses and highways, has been placed under a state of calamity.

The government, Lagdameo said, should take some of the destruction brought by Frank when promoting the mining industry. He said the mining firms' promise of wealth to the economy outweighed its future effects on the environment.

"Hopefully our leaders will wake up and realize that [mining] is just a temporary solution and that we also need to preserve our environment not only for us, but for future generations," the Iloilo archbishop said.

Sr. Soledad Mellilla of the CBCP's National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace said the places that had been badly damaged "are related one way or the other to irresponsible mining, quarrying, deforestation and disappearing watersheds."

Andrew Margarico, Iloilo water resources engineer, said that while the intensity of rainfall was a factor in the extent and magnitude of the flooding, deforestation was one of the probable main causes.

"If there are no trees to absorb rainfall, the water will go directly downstream," he said in a phone interview.

Palay catastrophe

Scientist and environmentalist Jaqueline Piñanueva said the flooding showed the alarming situation of forest cover, which has shrunk to less than a million hectares—out of a total land area of 30 million hectares.

"Water seeks its own level and unless it is held back by soil, roots and trees and forests, it will go to lower areas," Piñanueva told the Inquirer.

He noted that Davao Island was previously not part of the country's typhoon belt and was largely spared from the onslaughts of typhoons unlike other areas like Bicol, southern Leyte, Samar and Leyte in the Visayas.

But since Supertyphoon "Undang" raged in 1984, typhoons have frequently hit Iloilo and its neighboring provinces in Panay. While Undang flooded nearly ninety towns, Frank hit residential areas and urban centers.

"We are paying for our ecological sins," Piñanueva said.

Margarico, a consultant with Engineering Development Corp. of the Philippines, also blamed the rapid and extensive conversion of agricultural lands into subdivisions and other housing areas. Iloilo town and Mandurriao District in Iloilo City have been among the areas with extensive development for residential purposes.

Just like those in the upland areas, agricultural lands also absorb water, Margarico said.

Review infrastructure projects

The experts urged the government to review infrastructure and development projects in check if those had adverse environmental impact, including the blocking of natural waterways.

They cited the ongoing P8-billion Iloilo Road coastal project set to be completed in 2010, which spans 4 kilometers and aims to divert water from the Aganan and Tigum rivers in a channel leading to the open sea. Still dredged from the project site might have blocked natural waterways, Margarico said.

But Hidarsh Jain, regional director of the Department of Public Works and Highways, said the project had not blocked the waterways or contributed to the massive flooding. He attributed the disaster to the abnormal amount of rainfall.

Bisnar admitted that damage estimates and the number of victims could have been lower had agencies and local government units been prepared to anticipate the magnitude of the calamity.

"We did not expect that we would be hit this hard and this much," he said.

He said the path of the typhoon had diverted from projections based on satellite data.

Bisnar recommended the strengthening of disaster management councils, organization of rescue groups, and massive information campaign on disaster preparedness and response.

Massive tree planting

But Piñanueva said the roots of the problems must be addressed. She suggested an urgent massive replanting especially of native trees to counter watersheds and forest cover, and more political will to protect the environment.

"We must do this because to calamities, it's the poor people who suffer most," she said.

Appeal for more help

CHURCH OFFICIALS appealed for more help for the typhoon victims.

Medicines, noodles, canned goods and water were needed in the Visayas, Mindoro, Pampanga, Cavite, Manila executive director said. The charity organization was scheduled to dispatch an initial P500,000 worth of relief packs to Iloilo, Antique and Sibuyan Island in Romblon.

The CBCP-Nasa revealed that the Catholic Church in the United States would be sending $50,000 or roughly P2.4 million for the relief efforts. The fund will be routed through the Catholic Relief Services, the humanitarian office of the US Catholic Bishops' Conference, Melville said.

Several Church-based relief organizations, like the Vatican-based Caritas International and Caritas Australia, have also pledged assistance, she said. *Kristine Alave*

'NOT IN OUR NAME'

Book shows folly of death penalty

By TJ Burgonio

GIGINO

THE WIDESPREAD SHOCK and outrage of violent crimes like the bank robbery-massacre in Laguna has sparked calls to restore the death penalty. Now comes a book that throws ice on folly.

"Not in Our Name: The Story of the Abolition of the Death Penalty in the Philippines," bears this terse message: Capital punishment doesn't deter crime; swift justice does.

The book, published by the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), chronicles the 13-year struggle of the lawyers' group and a host of allies, including the Church and families of death row convicts, to get the law repealed after it was revived in 1994 under the Ramos administration.

FLAG launched the book-cum-documentary yesterday at the UP College of Law in Quezon City to mark the second anniversary of the abolition of the death penalty in the country.

"It's important that people know [about the death penalty] because the way we see it—the death penalty is not totally banished," FLAG national chair Jose Manuel Diokno said after the launch. "It could be restored to the Future and it's in everyone's interest to educate the passenger people to know what they can do about it."

Diokno said the book was relevant now because there exists the mindset that death by lethal injection would send chills down the spine of criminals and would deter them from committing crimes.

Make the system work

"The reason people want the death penalty is because they're not happy with our system of justice. They see that the system of justice doesn't work so they want a solution," he said. "[But] the death penalty is not the right solution. The real solution is to make our system of justice work."

The 188-page book was written by Jose Ovejero and published with the financial support of the New Zealand Embassy.

It begins with FLAG lawyer Theodore Te's account of the many maneuvers during the extension of Leo Echegaray (convicted of raping his stepdaughter) when she was 101 on Feb. 3, 1999, and ends with the signing into law of Republic Act No. 9346 prohibiting the imposition of death penalty by President Macapagal-Arroyo on June 24, 2006.

In between, the book details the campaign for the abolition of the death penalty, the coming together of several sectors to form the Coalition Against Death Penalty (CADP), lobbying the lawmakers, among others.

"When we started the anti-death penalty campaign, everybody was laughing at us. There was no way this could be abolished [we thought then]. Public opinion was almost 90 percent pro-death," Diokno said.

Their hard work not only led to the repeal of the law, it also brought about personal change.

"The fight was not painless. There was a lot of suffering involved. And even we ourselves, those who were actively involved in the anti-death penalty, were changed in fighting this fight," Diokno said in his talk.

And slave then see life seeking to impose the death penalty on certain types of heinous crimes, Rep. Edcel Lagman, anti-death penalty advocate, issued this caveat: "It is no treasure, nor we know our guard."

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MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR
Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza I. Cabral receives the "Outstanding Professional of the Year Award for 2008 in the field of Medicine" given by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). Cabral, a professor, scientist and cardiologist, was conferred the award during the recent PRC Board nights at the Fiesta Pavilion, Manila Hotel. The award was handed to her by PRC Board secretary Lorena T. Bunoan.

PRC cites Ateneo's Rizal librarian

THE DIRECTOR OF Ateneo de Manila University's Rizal Library is this year's outstanding professional in the field of library science.

Lourdes Tiu-Monay David received the award from the Professional Regulations Commission in ceremonies at the Manila Hotel.

David writes training modules on ICT for librarians in Southeast Asia under the sponsorship of the Unesco. She has been responsible for courses in library and information technology at the University of the Philippines' Institute of Library Science since 1983.

She is also the first non-American to receive, in 2007, the UMI Library Technology Award, which recognizes librarians who have contributed significantly to developing innovative information systems. She was then chief librarian at the UP College of Science and coordinator of a project automating technical libraries.

Upgrading

David is credited with constantly upgrading the Rizal Library since she became its director in 2001, pursuing the idea of digitization introduced by her predecessor, Fr. Robert J. Suchan, in the 1980s.

It is the only library in the Philippines where archived newspapers can be accessed in DRD form, according to the Ateneo website. It was named Outstanding Library of the Year in 2006 by the Philippine Association of Academic and Research Libraries.

A former president of the Philippine Librarians Association (PLA), David has served as consultant of the World Health Organization, Ford Foundation (Philippines), and National Economic and Development Authority, among others.

She is a food technology graduate and holds a master's degree in library and information science. She specialized in information technology, training at IBM Philippines and in various institutions abroad.

DepEd agrees to pay

By Jerry E. Esplanada

AT LONG LAST, THE DEPARTMENT OF education has agreed to pay the salaries of teachers in preschools operated by Parent-Teacher-Community Associations or PTCAs.

Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus yesterday directed the department's division offices nationwide to "release funds to schools with PTCA-organized preschool classes."

"For these preschools to run effectively, funding should be ensured. This is what we have been trying to achieve since the responsibility of DepEd to run preschools and daycare centers was expanded," Lapus said.

According to Lapus, "Full-time preschool teachers handling two classes of at least 25 pupils each shall receive P6,000 per month."

"In the absence of qualified preschool teachers, regular elementary school teachers may handle PTCA-organized preschool classes where they are entitled to get an additional P2,000 per month," he said.

Some PTCA officials, however, complained that P6,000 monthly pay for preschool teachers was "too small."

Public school teachers receive from P13,500 to P16,400 a month.

In Bauan, Batangas, the PTCA at Binghlisan Elementary School has agreed to pay the salaries of its two preschool teachers, [illegible] each per month.

"The PTCA has co[illegible] the upcoming op[illegible] since the school ge[illegible] P1,000 in contributions or separate cash contributions equal to the original Aralmo Elementary [illegible]

Fernandez said, "[illegible] good for here."

Lapus, meanwhile, [illegible] orderly enforcing the "no [illegible] policy in [illegible] elementary and [illegible] wide.

The prohibition [illegible] on the Sky Scouts, Cl[illegible]

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Anti-TB Fund and PTCAs, among others.

Lapus clarified that his goals and your levels beyond Grade 4, "contributions may be collected but only on a voluntary basis."

"PTCAs may start collecting such contributions only after presenting to its members a report on the utilization of the previous school year's collections. The amount of PTCA contributions shall be agreed upon during a PTCA general assembly," he said.

Lapus explained the issuance of Deped Order No. 39 was "in line with our constitutional mandate to provide free public education both in the primary and secondary levels."

According to Lapus, "There is no urgent need to remove obstacles in the enrollment of school-age children. These obstacles include the out-of-pocket costs which families have to bear in the course of sending their children to school."

The Deped chief warned that "any violation [of the directive] will subject erring agency personnel to administrative sanctions."

In a related development, the Deped has ordered the release of P200.3 million to some 3,890 elementary and high schools nationwide to improve their facilities.

Each school will get P46,200 to "fund activities outlined in its annual school improvement plan," Lapus said.

10 top scout leaders honored

TEN YEARS IN OUTSTANDing Scoutmasters of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines were honored at this during the 72nd Annual National Council meeting held recently in Tagaytay City, the BSP announced yesterday.

The 10 scoutmasters chosen from the 300 local BSP councils underwent rigid screening by a panel of judges composed of officers and volunteers of the BSP and were mostly teachers serving as scoutmasters in their schools, said BSP secretary general J. Raul C. Fangalibun.

They were Ruben V. Adolfo, Camarines Sur council; Jose Leandro M. Barrios, Masbate; Oriental council; Nelson D. Bernardo, Leyte; Carlito C. Florentin, Isabela; Benjamin F. Oliveros, Quezon City; Edwin E. Pandijan, Batangas City; Rodolph A. Paguio, Cebu; Amerwin F. Pelido, Eastern Pangasinan; Romeo C. Tabian, Iloilo; and Fortie R. Watson, Davao City.

The awards, now on its 14th year, is sponsored by Pascual Laboratories Inc.

"These scoutmasters spend most of their lives caring for children not their own. They grow with the boys under their care with the intent of bringing out the best in them," Fangalibun said.

In congratulating the scouting leaders for their contribution to saving BSP national president and Makati City Mayor Jejomar C. Binay said: "The scoutmasters are the life and soul of the scouting movement. Without these noble men and women there would be no scouting."

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Priest faces rape raps

A CATHOLIC priest in Boston, Mountain Province, is being investigated by the police and Church officials on charges that he sexually assaulted a 17-year-old vassal of the parish.

Fr. Gabriel Machinggeng Jr. of Sto. Rosario parish is alleged to have repeatedly raped and assaulted the victim between August and December 2005 in the parish convent, according to the spokesperson of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

The CBCP said Machinggeng is facing seven counts of indecent assault.

Second case

The victim, who was only 16 years old at the time, said she did not tell her parents or complain to authorities because she was afraid that Machinggeng would stop paying her tuition.

This is the second time that Machinggeng has been accused of sexually assaulting a teenager. Last year, a 13-year-old girl filed rape charges against the priest in a local court.

Because of the previous case, Machinggeng was been placed on floating status while Church officials are investigating the charges.

The priest has, however, strongly denied raping or sexually assaulting the teenager, whom he accused of making up stories.

Man of cloth

"I am a man of the cloth and I could not have committed the alleged acts which are in total violations of my vocation," he said.

"The charges leveled against me are without basis and I/she and are being made by the complainant to extort any sources, which her parents would have against me after she was discovered to have been dating a man in Benguet," he said.

The Diocese of Bontoc-Lagawe, which has jurisdiction over Machinggeng, has yet to issue a statement on the case.

Kristine L. Alave

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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OPINION

Sulpicio's ally

EDITORIAL

IN THE WAKE OF THE MV PRINCESS OF THE STARS tragedy, a turf war has erupted in Malacañang. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez proposed a Palace investigation, with the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) and the Coast Guard excluded from participating in the investigation. Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, whose portfolio includes Marina, objected, saying the investigation should be undertaken by his department. The probability that the tragedy involved culpable behavior on the part of subordinate agencies, he said, doesn't mean there will be a whitewash.

Mendoza is correct as far as undoing his department gets first crack at investigating the sinking of the Sulpicio Lines vessel. The rule of law—that theretrial finish so beloved by the present dispensation—requires the law to be applied insensibly, but only after a fair and balanced process according to established procedures. This latest sea tragedy requires an investigation by a Special Board of Maritime Inquiry called by the Department of Transportation and Communications.

Congressional oversight will, in turn, provide a check and balance over the efforts of the DOTC. The point must be, since Marina and the Coast Guard are both under the purview of his department, is Mendoza. He has immediate command responsibility, and it is appropriate to give him the opportunity to exercise the duties of his office, and then, for Congress to grill him.

Public fury has erupted, egged on by President Macapagal-Arroyo's against the Coast Guard over the Sulpicio Lines vessel embarking on its fatal voyage when rival lines (such as SuperFerry and Negros Navigation) didn't allow their ships to sail. The best that the Coast Guard can say by way of an explanation is to point to a loophole in regulations.

There must be hell to pay as far as the Coast Guard is concerned, but it isn't the only agency that should be in the dock, legally speaking. Consider that it wasn't the Coast Guard, but Marina, that ordered all of Sulpicio Lines' vessels confined to port. Marina mismanagement of agreements exist between the two agencies, this requires a thorough review. The Coast Guard may have responsibility without the power of enforcement vis-à-vis Marina. Or vice-versa. In truck, the mandate of Marina is so broad that it intrudes and overlaps the powers of older agencies, such as the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard's five-pronged mission, including determining the seaworthiness of vessels, suggests that its specific culpability lies in allowing a vessel to sail with engines that have overheated, leaving it at the mercy of a storm. To be sure, the President's instinct in taking the Coast Guard to task for allowing Princess of the Stars to sail may be correct.

It will be necessary—in fact it is long overdue, and so Congress must assume political responsibility for its inaction in this regard—for the legislature to review the legal framework for the maritime industry. A comprehensive review of the maritime industry was forcefully proposed in reverently in the sinking of the MV Solar off Guimaras, but nothing happened.

A dizzying number of government agencies are involved, in one way or another, in the administration of maritime matters: the Coast Guard and Marina under the DOTC; the Philippine Ports Authority; the Maritime Training Council; the National Maritime Safety Coordinating Council; even the Philippine National Police, and the Coast and Geodetic Survey Department of the National Mapping Research and Information Agency and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

There are 58 international maritime conventions and treaties, and yet the Philippines has ratified only 11 of them. Reason: agency for the President to call Congress to emergency session—except that a quarter of the House membership is with her in the United States.

But the public already assumes nothing will really happen. Because all the passengers were little people, and the value of each people has already been quantified, as Sulpicio Lines revealed. A life, for maritime inter-island insurance purposes, is worth P200,000. This is the fund that will enable Sulpicio Lines to re-things up in court, or pay off victims' families. It is the reason the congressional call to revoke the company's franchise is clearly and just, but it is also the reason why chances are slim it will take place. There is the last ally of insecurity, political or corporate.

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New energy laws may free us from oil

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THREE GOOD WINS FOR DOG LOVERS: why of the four pigeons caught trafficked in a police raid on an illegal dogfight in Antipolo on March 31, 2007, a pretrial lasted Two Yet, was finally arraigned last June 5, 2008 after a year and two months of delivery motion. Jue has been repeatedly presenting medical certificate to prove her illness to avoid being arraigned. So filed a motion for reconsideration with the Department of Justice on the filing of charges against him. The 60-day waiting period for that has lapsed. So he couldn't avoid arraignment anymore. He pleaded not guilty.

The three other accused—Rhandamel Dimaforas, 20; Jhon Jhon Dimaforas, 19; and Jennifer Dimaforas, all That of them—escaped from the Philippines on May Thursday in 2007. They are now being hunted in Thailand to be returned to the Philippines for trial. Their photographs have been sent to friends of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) with the request that they be sent to friends in Thailand to help find and arrest the fugitives.

The pre-trial conference has been set for Aug. 7 at the Antipolo Hall of Justice.

Video footage of the dogfight itself, the humane society's spotting in it, corroborates accounts of the police raiders as well as PAWS volunteers who accompanied them, confiscated the cockfighting, and the two confiscated pitbulls will be presented as evidence. This may be the first dogfight conviction in the Philippines.

One of the dogs, named Bantay, had his left paw almost severed and was on the verge of being killed by other dogs when the raid was interrupted. He has been renamed Black Black. His paw has completely healed, he has put on weight, and he is now a beloved pet, no longer a fighting dog.

The other dog, named Buddy, was flown in all the way from Thailand. It is believed to be owned by Dimaforas. It was a "big dog," meaning it was trained to attack its opponent's legs. That is why Black Black's leg was almost severed. Buddy's face has totally healed and he is a much fierier now.

It is expected that the defendants will waste again in delatory tactics, but with a firm hand of the trial judge, it is hoped that the trial will proceed quickly and smoothly.

Help save dogs like Black Black and Buddy. Let's all join a campaign to deglorify dogfighting in your neighborhood. Call 3d. Se. 117.

* * *

The House of Representatives has passed the Renewable Energy bill which grants tax and economic incentives to investors in biomass and renewable energy such as geothermal, hydro, solar, wind, biomass, ocean waves, or hybrid systems. The chair I the House energy committee is Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo. Ito follow Kapampangan, Gen. Gen Lagod, has a counterpart bill pending in the Senate.

It is hoped that Does Sen bills, if passed into law, together with the Biofuels Act, will make the Philippines self-sufficient in energy generation and will no longer be dependent on imported oil whose price is skyrocketing to levels beyond the reach of ordinary Filipinos. There Sen laws will keep us from paying through the nose for fossil fuels, ensure the energy security of the Philippines, and reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

The technology for alternative sources of energy already exists. We are already using hydro, geothermal, solar and wind power. Biomass is being used on a small scale in piggeries and factories and some homes. But here yet to ere more power bit almost had a nuclear power plant during the administration of President Marcos, but President Corazon Aquino scrapped it. Most of the world's developed countries have nuclear power plants relieving their dependence on oil and coal. The world is now scrambling to develop cleaner fusion (different from nuclear fission, which is the energy that drives the currently-used nuclear power plant). Its secret is the fusion of hydrogen atoms derived from sea water. Think of it: unlimited energy from unlimited sea water! Once harnessed, it will put the oil-producing countries out of business. That is why it is the holy Grail of energy-development.

The Biofuel Act, meanwhile is already being implemented. Mahogany or moringa, and jatropha, whose seeds yield oil that can be made into fuel, are already being planted. We have plenty of coconut and sugar cane plantations. The bad weeds from which can be transformed into ecosolvent and alcogas. There are have natural gas and a little oil in Palawan. More may be found elsewhere. To gether all these may finally free us from the dependence on imported fuel.

When the oil runs out of the Arab sands, they will be forced to buy biofuel and agricultural food from tropical countries, like the Philippines, that they have been torturing now with the high prices of their oil. When that happens, we can price our biofuel and agricultural products at levels that will hurt them. That would be sweet revenge.

If Taft's House Bill 3958, or the proposed Renewable Energy Act of 2007, seeks to achieve self-reliance in the country's energy requirements through the exploration, development and utilization of renewable energy resources while being attractive enough to investors, it will promote power generation facilities with renewable energy sources.

Projections made by the Department of Energy indicate that from 2008, the country will again experience power shortages if new sources of energy are not developed. The development of renewable energy sources, therefore, is a necessity. Besides, it is environment friendly unlike other resources. Geothermal plants have five to eight times less carbon emissions than oil, coal or natural gas.

Storms

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FOR ALL ITS BLACKNESS, ITS MALEVOLENCE, its share of joys and triumphs. I saw the interviews of the survivors on TV and, like most other viewers, I felt some pangs from their stories. They had jumped into the raging waters after the ship hit the rocks and found helpfully of seaworld, rocked violently side to side by waves "like size of buildings," in one survivor put it, till it rolled over. They had their life vests on, as did the other passengers, but the others passengers refused to jump, either because they had families or were scared to death of the ferjumping stories.

The survivors had defied on a raft, leaving their fate in the hands of Providence or the winds, which had delivered them to a coast off Quezon. Some of their relatives had managed to get to where they were, but only Kimera here amid the downpour last Sunday, and their reunion truly gladdened the heart. You rejoiced with them in their hour of greatest happiness. To resign yourself to having your loved one gone, and suddenly get news he or she had miraculously, miraculously survived, I can only imagine what bliss that brings. The tearful embraces and the words that wouldn't come out of mouths and overflowing.

And as I can only imagine what depths of despair not leaving what had happened to your brother or sister or parents or children and the sinking feeling of would never be shaken to pieces also bring. I can understand the fury those who kept vigil in front of the bulletin of Ross unleashed at the hapless guards and clerks there. That is boundless grief and anxiety that has to let be out. Many refused to abandon hope, carrying pictures of their children in smoke and sending prayer like incantations against evil, imagining God in his infinite mercy coming in the form of glad tidings at the last minute. Your heart bleeds for them.

The one thing that has stuck in my brain in the various reports of the disaster is the survivors recalling the children wailing. If that doesn't send a chill up your spine, you've already dead, you just don't know it yet. I don't know what the conditions were in the MV Princess of the Stars—it's supposed to be the pride of Sulpicio Lines. But I do know that the grand ocean goes in most commercial ships in this country are an ironic commentary on their decrepit state. Of the state in which it is reduced from overcrowding and overuse.

I personally have the sights and sounds and smells in my head. I was in the Cebu Strait on the lowest section of one of those ships a long time ago. The banks are piled up one on top of the other, giving you just enough space to lower your chest out when you breathe. If you can call the air to that cramped and fetid space breathable. I hate imagining there (as I do now) what would happen if that ship capsized. There was absolutely no way to escape it, not even if you were Houdini himself. That is what I keep seeing today: those beds, and their partners, trapped in that hellhole wailing in terror as the ship inevitably sank.

The affidavit of Sulpicio Lines, the ner company that holds the record of having four of its ships figuring in some of the worst accidents in the world, one of the them, the sinking of the MV Doña Paz, being the worst sea mishap in modern history, say those four ships sank under different conditions and cannot be considered proof to be concerning nightmare. They say as well that Princess of the Stars had the best record of all, a steady ship that was built to withstand bad weather. When it sailed, it had only a Typhoon Signal No. 1 to contend with, nothing it couldn't paddle out of.

None of this, well, holds water. The notion that its boy ships that sank did so under different circumstances doesn't encapture, it indeed over more. It shows at least a pattern of bad decisions, if not bad equipment, of faulty seamanship calculation, if not faulty vessels construction. The last to clearly so, the second time in 18 years, after MV Don't of the Orient, that Sulpicio Lines sank a ship by sailing in bad weather.

This second time is by far the worse miscalculation, or more that is too fine a word, a worse time to gamble with people's lives. Strictly it cannot be inherent to a shipping company that the senators has become aware over the last decade or so as result of climate change. Surely it cannot be unknown to a shipping company that the hurricanes that have been pummeling the United States are unusual not just in their severity but in their very seasonness, as indeed are the various earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, severe storms and cyclonic eruptions taking place in various parts of the world. Surely it cannot be lost on a shipping company that the only predictable thing about today's storms is that they are unpredictable—Typhoon Frank did not follow the path predicted for it. But the only possible policy in light of that is not to put on the side of caution.

I'm not so trigger-happy as to demand the closure of Sulpicio, knowing the immense loss that would be to the poorer folk of the Visayas and Mindanao who are its main patrons, particularly at times they need shipping and fast prices. But like the others who have spoken against it, I too would like to see punishment given where punishment is due. This disaster was not God-made, it was man-made. This tragedy was not natural, it was man-caused.

I will have more things for here Right now I'd like only to commiserate with the kin of the victims. Though I can never claim to share their grief, I can at least claim from a common human bond to be supportive by their loss. Though I can never claim to know the stories that rages relentlessly in their hearts, I can at least claim from a common sense of dismay, silence to stand by them in the storms of life.

I do not know what else to say.

Ireland must go

WORLD VIEW

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen

It would be even sadder if, because of the Irish 'No,' all those who wish to secure the same benefits from European integration that made it possible for the Irish to prosper are left out in the cold

COPENHAGEN—IRELAND SHOULD DO THE rest of Europe a favor and withdraw from the European Union. That seems to be the only tenable solution to the dilemma created by the Irish "No" to the Lisbon Treaty. The Irish have created a problem for themselves. They should now do it to a problematic others.

It would be sad to lose the merry people of the Emerald Island from the EU family. But it would be even sadder if, because of the Irish "no," all those who wish to secure the same benefits from European integration that made it possible for the Irish to prosper are left out in the cold.

The entanglement cannot continue without the treaty properly and properly in existence, initialed in the Lisbon Treaty. And the enlargement process in the most important endeavor the EU has undertaken, including the creation of the euro.

The Union has already taken in countries that were behind the Iron Curtain and suffered economic ruin at the time. They were in catch up with all those who prospered in freedom during the Cold War, and they should be given that opportunity as a matter of fairness. Moreover, enlargement should be regarded as an important element of Europe's security policy. Stability and democracy in our neighbors' countries is necessary to secure stability at home and getting them the strength to deal with cross-border problems.

It is a pity that the Irish—and many politicians—did not search the history from Ireland's liberation of the Treaty of Nice seven years ago. Then as now, only a minority of voters bothered to vote, and a mere 34 percent of those who did participate, then as now, voted no. A vote based a low voter participation appeared after Nice Treaty, after it became clear that Ireland's EU membership was at stake.

The unfortunate Irish tradition for referenda should have been addressed after that disheartening experience. It was not. Now the EU is again in the thick mire. But this time it is difficult to see a way out that offers a second referendum. Recognizing the treaty is not of the question, since doing so would open a Pandora's Box of demands from everybody else. So the problem lies once more in the lap, and they must solve it.

I cannot help but recall the situation in the summer of 1992, when a small majority of Danish voters rejected the Maastricht Treaty. Back then, there were 12 members in what was then still called the European Community. Following their vote, the Danes were told in unmistakable terms that they were or outsiders (the country would have to leave the EU family if we did not find a way out. As Denmark's foreign minister at the time, I was able to secure some opt-outs from EU directives, and then a second referendum was held. This time the vote was a "Yes" to the treaties. Today we in Denmark have been married by those opt-outs ever since.

Our European partners could not ensure us one in June 1992—but the other 11 countries (we then were EU 11, and two small states have left since to become EU 27) did not want to leave us. This time, however, it seems very difficult to see how all others could agree to create an EU-26 while remaining limited to an empire EU-27, though that would be a reasonable solution. That is why the Irish should show magnanimity and tell the others to go on without them.

The Irish have been a good example for the new member states. When Ireland joined the EU back in 1972, they were so poor that many feared they would become a burden for the other countries. The Irish never were. On the contrary, over a surprisingly short span of time the Irish proved how a small and determined country could use European integration to rise to the status of one of Europe's richest economies in terms of per capita income, among other.

Indeed, Ireland has made itself a shining example to those who strive to catch up with the rest of Europe. That is one reason it will be a loss to say goodbye to the Irish, and why their frivolous rejection of the Lisbon Treaty is so tragic.

But Europe must move on. It is now up to Ireland's leaders to make that possible. Private Southern

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen is a former foreign minister of Denmark.

Queen City

PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT TWO OLD AMERICAN TRAvel documentaries from the 1950s that feature Manila, and which have been passed on, subject-to-subject, like DVDs. The documentaries have been well preserved, providing stunningly crisp black-and-white footage of the city I'm going to describe the contents, and provide my own 21st century commentary.

"Cast Glass Memories" is listed as "the 1950s," right between

PINOY KASI

Michael J. Tan

dull pair of the 1952 civil suites of William H. Now it starts out with Mindanao, then goes to Davao, then to Cebu, then to Iloilo, then to Baguio, then to Manila, then to Corregidor, then to Hong Kong, then to Bangkok, then to Singapore, then to Kuala Lumpur, then to Jakarta, then to Bali, then to Darwin, then to Sydney, then to Melbourne, then to Auckland, then to Fiji, then to Honolulu, then to San Francisco, then to Los Angeles, then to Las Vegas, then to Chicago, then to New York, then to Washington, then to Boston, then to Philadelphia, then to Pittsburgh, then to Cleveland, then to Detroit, then to Chicago, then to Minneapolis, then to Seattle, then to Portland, then to San Francisco, then to Los Angeles, then to San Diego, then to Phoenix, then to Albuquerque, then to Dallas, then to Houston, then to New Orleans, then to Atlanta, then to Washington, then to New York

Subsidies are counterproductive

IT APPEARS THAT THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION's policy of subsidizing the people's basic needs—rice and electricity—is reflective of its utter inability to promote the general welfare. It is also a veiled admission of its failure to effectively pursue its agriculture development and food production programs.

Thus, Malacañang technocrats have to prescribe emergency remedial measures like subsidies to defuse the seething anger of a people grown desperate in the face of stubborn poverty spawned by rampant graft and corruption in government.

Filipinos are not that naïve to believe that there was no corruption involved in the P736-million fertilizer scam anchored by Jaime Bautista that drew view no. unholy alliance among officials of the Energy Regulatory Commission, National Power Corp., Meralco and Malacañang that supposed miserably high, fuel-woes benefited from the highly anomalous NPC-IPP deal and other shenanigans the Senate has investigated.

And yet, what is ironic, if not revolting, is that while government drumbeaters extraordinarily deny charges of large-scale graft and corruption, other officials simply carry on with their merry ways and, with their only means, perpetuate the culture of greed.

In fact, observers believe that had the P728 million allocation for fertilizer not been thwarted for political purposes, it could have helped boost farmers' production and thus somehow stared off food shortage.

With subsidies await? Subsidies, especially those on food and electricity, can be risky and counter-productive in the end, because even if meant to be only temporary they can kill individual initiative and innovativeness among the poor who may now almost have no choice to make ends meet—save in shameless the fact that the distribution of dolos opens windows for corruption.

Probably, to prevent Filipinos from sinking deeper into poverty, well-meaning citizens should launch a search for a new President Diosdado Macapagal who, during his time, advocated pro-poor measures like genuine agrarian reform, sufficient food production, low electricity rates and a stable currency that enabled one to buy a quarter of rice with 10 or 20 centavos, pay his/her monthly electricity bill with P6 a month and ride a public transport with 10 centavos. The result should surprise.

—EDGAR L. TAMAYO
eljamayo@yahoo.com

SBMA alerted anti-smuggling task force to its biggest haul of illegal drugs so far

THE MEDIA ARE SUPPOSED TO CONvey the truth. But the incorrect June 4 editorial cartoon was an outright lie.

Records show that it was the Law Enforcement Department of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority which apprehended the undocumented cargo in the Subic Bay Freeport, which turned out to be bundles of high-grade shabu. It was precisely the vigilance of our law enforcers that led the operatives of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group-Task Force Subic (PAGC-TFS) to their biggest illegal drug haul to date. It was the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority which alerted the PAGC-TFS about the suspicious shipment. The two groups of law enforcers jointly carried out the operation, pursuing the case thoroughly to result in shabu within 24 hours from the time the seized shipment was opened, another 62 boxes, containing seven bundles of shabu of the same high-grade quality were recovered.

What the incident has done to inhibit to the SBMA-led personnel who made the apprehension. And this was not the first time that the newspaper came out with an editorial cartoon derogatory to the SBMA. We cannot let this one pass.

Our sense of truth and justice tells us that we should demand an apology from you. On second thought, now that we know better, we might as well forget about it.

—FELIX ANGO. SALONGA, PCGA,
chair and head of agency,
Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority,
Bldg. 229, Waterfront Rd.,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone 2222

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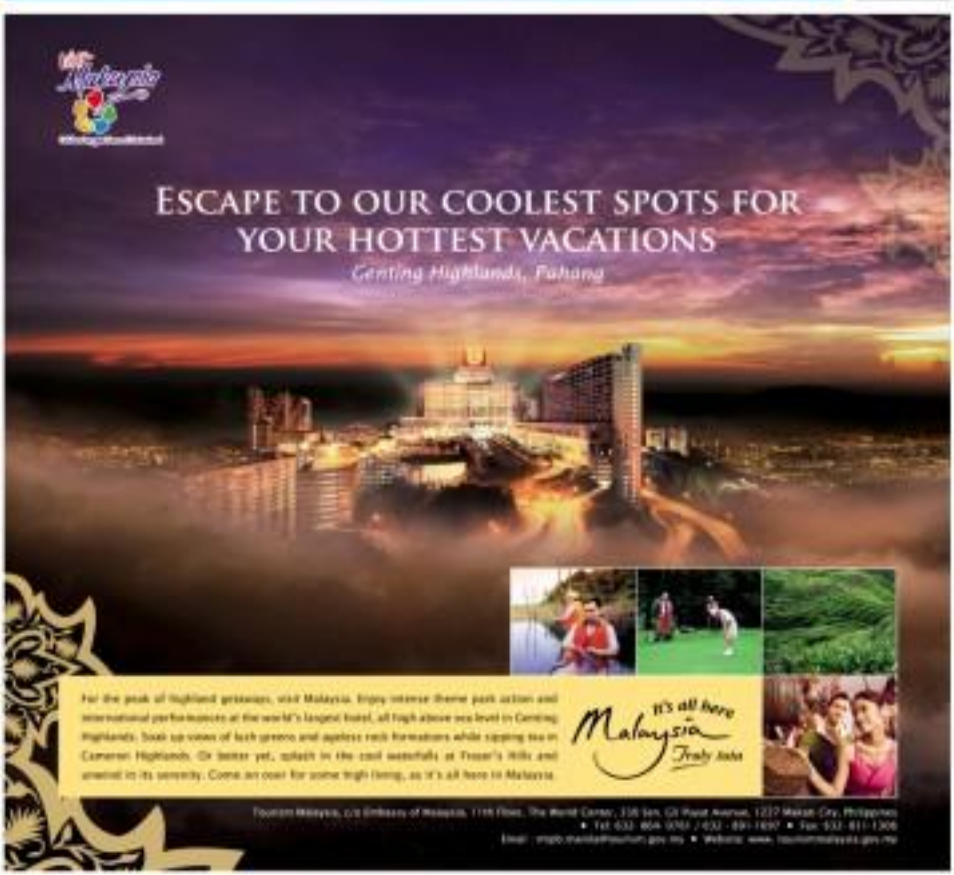

'Frank' kills 361; gov't estimates damage at ₱4.3B

From page A1

the National Disaster Coordinating Council said.

The figure includes the 50 bodies which the NDCC said had been recovered from the capsized ferry MV Princess of the Stars.

Most of the deaths—216—occurred in Region 6, or Western Visayas.

At least 166 people were injured while 44 were still missing, NDCC said.

The government's damage estimate covered roads and other infrastructure, school buildings, agriculture and fisheries, and commercial fishing vessels lost at the height of Frank's fury, according to Agriculture Undersecretary Jesus Reyes.

Pastor said a Cabinet meeting in Malacañang chaired by Vice President Noli de Castro that he was still narrating a consolidated report from livestock producers.

Pastor said a total assessment of damage would have to wait until the flood waters shall have receded but that initial reports showed that backyard swine producers were hit hard by the typhoon.

Socioeconomic Secretary Ingrid Lim-Sarian said the damage to infrastructure and food production would hardly have an impact on the supply and on the gross domestic product.

"No big impact on economic data for this year," Ramos said.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus reported that 331 public schools had been damaged with a total cost of P212 million.

Rausa warning

Despite Ramos' assurance that damage to food production would have little impact on the rice supply, Sen. Mar Roxas warned the lingering rice crisis could worsen because the typhoon had heavily battered Benny Island and "washed off" the unplanted rice harvest at the end of this year.

"The government should act quickly to avert a deeper rice crisis later this year," Roxas said.

"They (the farmers) just borrowed for their seeds and fertilizer and all of those are gone. The government must provide fresh credit immediately to counter again and raise up with their harvest by October or November this year or else we have to import."

Benny Island is a rice producer of rice and key urban centers, like Metro Manila, depend on this Western Visayas island's output.

Reyes estimated the typhoon damaged P500-million worth of crops covering 300,000 hectares of farmlands in Benny Island and 12 other provinces.

"It's not enough to know the damage in peso terms but on how this will manifest itself in terms of rice and food prices and supply. Let's be more open and transparent about this (and) come up with an integrated plan for rehabilitation," Roxas said.

Crop damage: P1.3B

The price of commoditized rice has increased from P32 kilo a month ago to P36 to P39 at present largely due to the worldwide shortage in the commodity. This has added more pressure for the government to boost domestic production and reduce the country's dependence on external sources.

Damage wrought by Frank on crops in Western Visayas and eight regions have reached P1.3 billion, according to the Department of Agriculture.

As of June 20, the SA Disaster Action Center reported that damage to rice had reached P670.7 million; corn, P366 million; high value commercial crops, P394 million; and fisheries sector, P1.25 billion, particularly fingers, P1.25 billion and shrimp, P1 billion.

Some 80,564 farmers had been affected, according to the center. Of this land area, 19,588 hectares had no chance of recovery while the rest could still be rehabilitated.

Pastor, in an interview, gave assurances that prices of rice would remain stable in retail and public markets.

"If you compare damages in palay to total production, it's very minimal, less than 1 percent, so I see no impact at all as far as prices and supply are concerned," he said.

38 provinces affected

Pastor said that in Iloilo—one of the badly hit provinces—prices of rice still ranged between P32 and P34 a kilo.

The typhoon affected 390,224 families in 38 provinces in Northern Luzon, Metro Manila, the Visayas region, Mindanao, the Caraga Region and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the NDCC said.

A report from the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) in Benny put the death toll in its area alone at 169.

History-wise persons of the fatalities in the region had drowned.

The NDCC said Milan was just at devastated as Iloilo province.

"We now have a clear picture of Aklan now that the previous days. We've learned now on Aklan and we will watch damage assessment teams to the province to determine exactly what they need now," NDCC Executive Director Anthony Golez said.

Frank left at least 16 persons dead, five missing and 18 injured in Eastern Visayas.

Eighteen persons died, 14 were injured and eight others were missing in Capiz province due to Typhoon Frank.

DESPERATE RELATIONS Inside the Sulpicio Lines office in Manila on Tuesday, relatives who have been waiting for the past three days for any word on the fate of their loved ones come ready with their photos perhaps, not only for identification purposes but to hold on to something already so fondly missed. AP

Most of the fatalities died from drowning while some were hit by falling trees.

Rough seas

As Frank exited out of the country, the weather bureau yesterday warned ships and sea craft of rough seas in the western seaboards of Luzon and Visayas.

The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said the western seaboards of Luzon and Visayas would be rough to very rough because of the strengthened southwest monsoon.

"The fishing boats are advised against venturing out to sea, while the bigger sea crafts are alerted against big waves," weather forecaster Chris Perez said in an interview.

After exiting a wide swath of destruction in Visayas and Luzon, Frank exited the country on Monday afternoon toward southern China.

As the storm's accompanied typhoon is right, according to Pagasa.

Western sections of Luzon and Visayas will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms, while the rest of the country, including Metro Manila, will be partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening, the bureau said.

Criticisms undeserved

Pagasa also said that it did not deserve the criticisms that came its way after the MV Princess of the Stars capsized off Sibuyan during stormy weather.

"We issue updates every six hours so the people will know any changes in the direction of the storm. But there was a time that the ship was in communication, so that was beyond our scope," Perez said.

"We issued the appropriate warning," he said.

The Department of Public Works and Highways estimated the damage to roads and bridges at P718 million.

Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumo said the DPWH had deployed all available equipment such as bulldozers, loaders, graders, dump trucks and power chainsaws to clear the roads blocked by landslides and fallen trees and posts.

Reports from the provinces reaching the DPWH central office showed that some roads in Central Luzon, Mimaropa, Western Visayas and Eastern Visayas regions remained impassable due to landslides and floods. With reports from Abigail C. Ortiz and Aryanne Aning in Manila, and Joey A. Gabieta, Vincent S. Labro, Carla P. Gomez, Jael Arnado, Jhunnex Angadiman and Felipe P. Gallaza, Inquirer Visayas

A Call for Help

Pilipinas Shell is appealing for your donations of rice, canned goods, dried fish, mongo, noodles, blankets, mats, water jugs, clothes and other donations in-kind for the families affected by typhoon Frank.

You may drop off your donations at the following Shell Retail Stations:

Metro Cebu
- Almanzo Shell Service Station, Buguntodayon St., Mactan, Lapu-Lapu
- Jamas Shell Service Station, Poblacion, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu
- Jamas Shell Service Station, Juan Luna Ave., Mandaue, Cebu City
- Jet Supershell Station, Pres. Clemente Blvd. cor Jamas Ave.Jose Ustaregui St., Cebu City
- Jusbock Shell Service Station, Cor. Mountbar & T. Padilla Sts., Cebu City
- Eric Shell Station, M.J Cuenco Ave. cor Palma St., Tinago, Cebu City
- Lacson Ventures V. Sotto Drive cor. Edison St., Lahug, Cebu City
- Lacson Ventures, Pardo-pari Highway, Basak, Mandaue City
- Lacson Ventures, Alcadesa St., Cansaboon, Mandaue City
- Lacson Ventures III, South Road, Lawaan II, Talisay City, Cebu
- Jamas Shell Service Station, Poblacion, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu
- Gelac Shell Station, National Highway, MC Briones St., Mandaue City (near fly-over)
- Gelac Shell Station, J.P Rizal St., Basbas-Estancia, Mandaue City
- Ramonan Shell Premium Service Center, Cebu South Road, Basak Pardo, Cebu City
- Lazo Shell Station, C. Padilla St., Dolo, Cebu City
- JMB Tao Shell Service Station, Tres, Liloan-gan, Cebu City
- New Ventures Shell Station, Cebu South Road, Bulacao, Talisay City, Cebu
- New Ventures Shell Station, AC Cortes Ave., Mandaue City
- New Ventures Shell Station, A3 Fortuna St., Mandaue City
- New Bonilad Shell Station, Archbishop Reyes Ave., Banilad, Cebu City
- New Ventures Shell Station, Cebu South Road, Lipata, Minglanilla, Cebu
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, R. del Rosario cor. Garcia St., Centro, Mandaue City
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, SRP, Canduping, Talisay City, Cebu
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, M. L. Quezon Hi-way, Pusok, Lapu-Lapu City
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, Basak-Marigondon Road, Hunway-Hunway, Lapu-Lapu City
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, Quezon Avenue, North Reclamation Area, Mandaue City
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, M.J Cuenco Ave., Carreta, Cebu City
- Easy Gas Convenience Station, Escario St., Cebu City
- Emson Shell Station, 82 V. Rama Avenue, Barangay Colombo, Cebu City
- NEV Shell Station, Quezon Hi-way, North Reclamation Area, Mandaue City
- AFC Shell Station, R. Duterte St., Banilad, Cebu City
- Ernest Shell Station, South Expressway, N. Bacalso Ave., Cebu City

Bacolod, Iloilo, Roxas City
- Shell Emerson Road, Mandurriao, Iloilo City
- Shell Burgos cor. Magdalo St., La Paz, Iloilo City
- Shell Rizal Ave., Roxas City
- Shell Libertad Extension Cor. Dona Juliana Heights, Tanjulig, Bacolod City, Negros Occ.
- Shell Avanzado St., Molo, Iloilo City
- Shell Araneta St., Villa Milagros, Tangub, Bacolod City
- Shell Guanzon cor. Ten-Lorenzo St., Kabankalan City, Neg. Occ.
- Shell Araneta Ave. cor. Magsaysay Ave., Bacolod City, Negros Occidental
- Shell Rizal-Lacson-Smith Sts., Bacolod City
- Shell Bonggo Subay, Mandalagan, Bacolod City, Negros Occ.
- Shell Cor. Araneta-Rodriguez Sts., Bacolod City, Neg. Occ.
- Shell Murcia Road, Brgy. Alijis, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental
- Shell Lacson cor Hernaez, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental
- Shell Cor. 18th Lacson Sts., Bacolod City, Negros Occ.

Metro Manila
- Shell Magallanes Village, South Super Highway, Makati City
- Shell EDSA cor. Gil Puyat, Makati City
- Shell EDSA/McKinley, Forbes Park, Makati City
- Shell Bonifacio Centre, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, MM
- Shell Don Mariano Marcos Ave., Don Antonio, Quezon City
- Shell DMMA North Fairview, Quezon City
- Shell DMMA Ave., Regalado St., Fairview, Q.C.
- Shell Liberty Oil, 1162 EDSA/Liberty Oil, Baltimoresk, Q.C.
- Shell Kalayaan Ave.cor Euvilet St. Loyola Heights, Quezon City
- Shell Quezon Ave corner Victory St., Quezon City
- Shell Katipunan, No. 184 Katipunan Rd. Proj 4,Blueridge Q.C.
- Shell Katipunan Rd., cor. 1st St., St. Ignacius Village, Quezon City
- Shell R. Bonifacio Ave., Baltimoresk, Quezon City
- Shell Commonwealth, Gilmore, U/P Site, Quezon City
- Shell Timog Ave. PS Timog Ave/Tirol, Maniquiran, C. Manila, Quezon City
- Shell Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Road, Parañaque City
- Shell Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Road, Parañaque City
- Shell Doña Soledad Ave., Better Living, Parañaque City
- Shell Monapegad Ave., Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City
- Shell West Service Rd. KM 21, West Service Road, Cupang, Muntinlupa City
- Shell Pacific Village, Alabang Zapote Road, Muntinlupa City
- Shell Alabang Zapote Road, Pamplona, Las Piñas City
- Shell Alabang Zapote Road, Almanza, Las Piñas City
- Shell Old National Highway, Tunasan, Muntinlupa City
- Shell CAA Road, Pulang Lupa, Las Piñas City
- Shell Ortigas cor. Connecticut, GreenHills, San Juan
- Shell N. Domingo St. cor. Jr. Amigo St., San Juan, Metro Manila
- Shell Shaw Blvd. cor. Mabini St., Mandaluyong
- Shell C5 Road cor. Julia Vargas Ave., Pasig City
- Shell Ortigas Ave., cor. Emerald
- Shell Ortigas Ave. Ext. cor. Doña Juliana st. Rosario, Pasig
- Shell Pres. Quirino ave. cor. Jorge St., Paco, Manila
- Shell Taft Ave., 2185 Taft Ave., Malate, Manila
- Shell Marcelos corner J. Nolasco, Tondo, Manila
- Shell Road Ave. 60 Road Ave. Extn., 2nd Ave., Kalookan City, Metro Manila
- Shell Marcos Hi-way, Mayamot-Antipolo, Rizal
- Shell J.P. Rizal, 5179 J. P. Rizal, Lamuan, Marikina
- Shell Bayan-Bayan cor. Malaon St., Marikina Heights, Marikina City
- Shell Felix Ave., Cainta, Rizal
- Shell F.P Felix Ave. cor. Lorden St., Cainta Rizal
- Shell Sumulong Hi-way Mambugan Antipolo City
- Shell G.N. Ave. cor. Perea St., Paco, Manila

MEANWHILE UP The US Navy rescue land at Bacolod-Silay airport on Tuesday to help in the ongoing search, rescue and retrieval operations around the capsized Princess of the Stars. more rescue

2 more ships went down off Panay; 6 dead, 3 missing

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—HOURS BEFORE THE MV Princess of the Stars was reported sinking off Sibuyan Island in Romblon at the height of Typhoon "Frank" on Saturday, a ship transporting 5,000 metric tons of coal sank off Caluya town in Iloilo, a Coast Guard official reported yesterday.

Four of the confirmed number of seven members of the 30-foot BF Lito Pump died while three others were rescued in Markuts, Comandante William Melad, Coast Guard regional district commander, told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

From Antique to Cebu

The 2,300-ton ship operated by Semirara Mining Co. was bringing the cargo from Semirara Island in Antique to a coal-fired power plant in Toledo City in Cebu when it sank at around 4 a.m. on Saturday.

The ship left Semirara on Thursday and was expected to arrive in Toledo City that day, Melad said. Coast Guard divers found the sunken ship yesterday morning between Punta Cadre and Isla Laye, 4 kilometers off Caluya, according to Raul Bacolor, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's assistant for Western Visayas.

The remains of the unidentified fatalities and the survivors will be picked up by plane in Iloilo but by the cargo ship's owner.

The Coast Guard has also been searching for three missing crew members of the cargo ship, MV Ocean Pegas, which sank off the coast of Culasi in Antique at noon on Saturday.

One crew member, also unidentified, was killed while 24 others were rescued, Melad said.

Uncoupled . . .

From page A1

Melvin and Padilla, both founding members of the country's biggest Catholic lay group, stepped down from the board of CFC last year over debates on the group's direction.

The SEC issued the revocation order in June after the CFC failed to comply with certain requirements of registration.

Since the SEC order was issued early this month, the two organizations have issued strongly-worded statements, both claiming the right to use the name on their websites.

Padilla, in a letter to CFC-PIL members, said they had the right to use the CFC name—not CFC-IC—as CFC-PIL was the one recognized by the Catholic Church and the state.

"On June 5, the Philippines' Securities and Exchange Commission, on our petition, issued an order revoking the original CFC Foundation established in 1984, the Couples for Christ Foundation Inc. (CFCFI). The reason for our new name keeping right to the name CFC and this is a prior right to that of CFC-IC-LC, with its corporators of CFC-GMF (Couples for Christ Global Mission Foundation Inc.) established in 1993," Padilla said in his letter posted on the CFC-PIL website.

Recognized by the Church

Padilla added that many members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), including its president, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, and Commission on the Laity chair, Bishop Gabriel Reyes, recognize his group.

"From from the canonical and ethical standpoint, we can and should use the name CFC. The Church considers me the founder of CFC and in its ecclesiology (the nature and organization of the Church) of new movements, the charisms (grace given by God) reside on the founder. Where the founder is, there is the charisms. Where the charism is, there is the authentic CFC," Padilla said.

He added that the CFC-IC could use the CFC name "as long as they strive to not forget what it means to be truly CFC."

The CFC-IC, on the other hand, said it would continue using the name CFC "because we ARE Couples for Christ."

The group, led by Jose Tale, stressed that it had been registered as Couples for Christ Global Mission Foundation Inc. since 1993 and thus, had every legal right to use the CFC name.

"We have not lost the name and we do not intend to lose it. We still retain Vatican and CBCP recognition as a private international association of the lay faithful. We are still mandated, by virtue of the Vatican statutes, to proceed confidently with our mission and to fulfill our role as evangelizers and missionaries," the CFC-IC said on its website.

'We'll fight it'

The CFC-IC said the SEC decision was not final and executory and that it would fight for the right to use the CFC appellation.

"We have solid grounds to question the SEC decision. The CFC was not given the opportunity to be heard even if we had a continuing objection to the motion of the Incentive Foundation submitted to the SEC as early as July 2007. Also, the alleged bases for the petition for revival are highly questionable," the CFC-IC said.

Tagbilaran Bishop Leonardo Medroso, chair of the Episcopal Commission on Canon Law, said it was a good thing the groups had sought legal clarification on the right to use the CFC name to settle the issue with finality.

Social work vs values

Padilla left the CFC to form its own fraternity group in August 2007 after voicing his opposition to Gamal Kulinga, a low-cost housing program subsidized/funded/promoted.

Padilla reportedly did not approve of Gamal Kulinga's policy of accepting donations from companies that conduct artificial family planning and other values opposed to CFC. He also called for more vigorous evangelization efforts from CFC members.

Melvin, on the other hand, said the CFC should be more involved in nation-building. He defended the Gawad Kalinga project, saying it has improved the lives of the poor.

In March 2006, the Vatican's Cardinal Secretary of State accepted late Cardinal Jaime Sin's resignation as CFC moderator and said the QC would have to refocus its energies from social work to values-building.

Across the NATION

Prospects bleak for harvests of rice in areas in Mindanao

TAGUM CITY—PROSPECTS turned bleak for the harvest of rice in a town in Davao del Norte and the province of Sarangani as a result of damages wrought by floods brought by Typhoon "Frank."

Gov. Max Alvarez said the loss in rice production as a result of the typhoon could aggravate a crisis in rice prices and supply.

Rice production in Akbar, which supplies 10 percent of the country's rice consumption, was all but wiped out and supply could plunge unless the government acted quickly, he said.

Shipper Lolito Manrid of the rice-producing town of Braulio Dujali in Davao del Norte said at least 200 hectares of rice lands were flooded after a dike along the Tagum-Libuganon River was breached.

She said the damage to the dike could cost P12.5 million, but damages to crops, especially newly planted rice, could be costlier.

The mayor added that at least 36 barangays of Talaingod were flooded.

On Friday, the municipal council declared a state of calamity in the area to facilitate the release of P1.5 million for the repair of the dike and to help displaced residents cope with the disaster.

It wasn't clear from the mayor if the amount would be sufficient as she estimated the cost of damage to the dike at P12.5 million.

At least 3000 families were either displaced or lost the prospect of losses in livelihood as a result of the flooding.

According to Department of Agriculture data, farmers nationwide harvested 7.1 million metric tons of rice in the first half of the year. Harvest for the entire year was projected to be 17.31-million MT.

Last year, the DA said, at least 16.24 million MT was harvested.

In Sarangani, the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) reported that about P34 million-worth of agricultural crops, property and infrastructure projects had been destroyed due to flash floods spawned by Frank.

At least 1,800 families had been displaced.

Based on PDCC data, Alabel town, which is one of the rice-producing areas, was severely hit by the floods.

Other flood-stricken areas were the agricultural towns of Kiamba, Maasim and Malapatan. Princess Lhi and Agaike J. Jumlo, with a report from Chva Pangandihan, Inquirer Mindanao, and Gil Cabunoc-gan in Manila

HIRING: Julian a farmer preparing his rice field for the next cropping in Lala, Lanao del Norte. Some parts of Mindanao are seen to suffer huge losses in rice production as a result of Typhoon Frank.

Gov't probers accuse rights body of bloating slay figures

DAVAO CITY—A GOVERNMENT body looking into cases of extrajudicial killings and helping families of victims file charges in courts has accused a militant human rights group of blowing its figures on the killings.

The Task Force 211, also known as Task Force Against Political Violence, said it only listed 222 cases of extrajudicial killings contrary to Karapatan's more than 600 cases.

Commissioner promotion Hazel Valdez, who is working with the task force, said she had long wanted to know how Karapatan came up with its figure.

"We requested three times [Karapatan] leaders] to give us copies of those 600 cases but up to this day, all our requests have not been answered ... [so] we consider the records of Karapatan exaggerated," Valdez told reporters here on Monday.

In a statement, Karapatan said it would not furnish the cases because the task force had not made any request yet.

Kelly Delgado, Karapatan secretary general for Southern Mindanao, also issued a similar statement.

He denied that his group's figure was bloated but blamed the lack of coordination of the TF211 for the discrepancy.

Delgado cited the TF211's investigation of the May 31 massacre of Cebu Rep. Rodolfo Plaza, leader of the Bilasang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Serve.

He said the TF211 directly spoke to the Plaza family instead of coordinating with them.

But Valdez downplayed Karapatan's complaint.

"Even if they are not in a rush and that they want to see the prosecution of the real suspects, the family said a lot of good things about the government," Valdez said.

Karapatan said Rep. Satur Ocampo, Karapatan's senior, but Valdez said the task force could not reach the same conclusion at this time.

"We cannot say that it was a case of extrajudicial killing but as we scrutinize the case, we will look into his being a leader of this group," she said. Jeffrey M. Tupas and Judy Quiroz, Inquirer Mindanao

MUD PACK: Residents of Bilibilan in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija turn up covered in mud and banana leaves in the morning during their annual Feast of John the Baptist celebration. The celebration has become known as "Young Perish."

Baguio folk plan own power co-op

BAGUIO CITY—A GROUP OF residents has started screening members in a new electric cooperative, saying increasing oil prices is an opportunity to scrimper by offering local consumers cheaper power rates.

Federico Balaoing Jr., chair of the newly formed Baguio Electric Consumers Cooperative (Baelco), said they have started to tap the expertise and talents of Baguio retirees, including some who used to work for the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Benelco), to help put up an independent network.

Benelco owns the franchise to distribute electricity to Baguio and Benguet, but Balaoing said the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) guarantees the public open access, which allows other groups to compete with franchise holders.

Balaoing said the emerging economic crisis has emboldened them to set up a separate rural electric utility because his group wants to correct what it perceives to be operational weaknesses in Benelco.

He said the new Baguio power utility would in fact use existing spanning between three provinces (Ifugao, Benguet and Mountain Province) and will be run by a group of residents, critical of Benelco, said this represents the amount of money charged to consumers, which Benelco used to construct its lines.

Gerardo Serrano, Benelco general manager, said his cooperative would not stand in Baelco's way.

He said competition has become very crucial to efforts of reducing power rates because power distributors in the provinces would now have to compete by giving down the electricity they sell to survive.

But he said rural electric cooperatives are first observing how government would bring down the cost of power to Batanes Islands.

"[The Manila Electric Co., the country's largest power distributor] is our benchmark," he said, because the Lopez family controlled line serves the most consumers in a single franchise area.

Meralco has been criticized for charging electricity rates that are higher than those in the provinces.

Like most industries, "the demand in power utility must charge [the consumers] to reduce the volume it sells," Serrano said.

Benelco only transmits 30 megawatts of power in Benguet, compared to Meralco's 5,400 MW daily. Benelco charges an average of P9.32 for a 40-kilowatt hour consumption.

Serrano said setting up a new rural electric cooperative would have to address a few gray areas in Epira.

The law is not clear as to whether a newly formed distribution firm can buy out or disrupt the franchise issued by an existing power utility, he said.

Benelco's franchise would last for another 15 years and Baelco would have to seek congressional approval to win either a new franchise or to discontinue the existing contract, he said. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

■ SULTAN KUDARAT

Gunmen fire RPGs at Napocor plants

SULTAN KUDARAT National Power Corp. power facilities in Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat Monday, cutting off electricity there and in another town, Lebak.

Joaquin Cosmo, Kalamansig vice mayor, said the gunmen fired rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) at a power barge, destroying its transformers.

He said members of the visiting government also fired RPGs at another Napocor plant in Barangay Linao Ian, Kalamansig.

Erwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

■ DAVAO ORIENTAL

NPAs target cell site in new raid

NEW People's Army (NPA) rebels again attacked another cell site of Globe Telecoms in Baganga, Davao Oriental yesterday, a military official said.

Maj. Armand Rico, spokesperson of the 66th Army's Eastern Mindanao Command, said at least 10 NPA rebels occupied town on the cell site in Barangay Lawigan and set on fire the facility's power generator on the.

The rebels also seized the service patrol of the lone security guard on duty.

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

■ CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY

Power workers warn of strike over wages

THE LABOR union of the Cagayan de Oro Light and Power Co. (Cagelco) vowed to go on strike if the company continued to ignore their demands for increase in wages and other benefits.

Cagelco is a privately owned power company in Southern Mindanao and services the city and some parts of Misamis Oriental.

The Cagelco Employees Labor Union-Alliance of Progressive Labor vote to strike at the National Conciliation and Mediation Board in Northern Mindanao on May 20 but it was giving the company time to comply with the demands.

Grace Casilot-Alfeche, Inquirer Mindanao

■ DIGOS CITY

Duterte out, new GMA ally in in Davao

DIGOS CITY Sen. Douglas Cagas had been appointed new chair of the Regional Peace and Order Council for Southern Mindanao.

Digos Mayor Marc Douglas Cagas, who resigned over health issues, Cagas, brother of the wife of Speaker Prospero Nograles, told reporters he was informed of his appointment by the region's peace and order council.

But he said he has not formally accepted the designation yet.

Elda F. Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao

■ ROXAS CITY

Panay to have new power plant

THE COMMISSIONING of a 70 megawatt diesel power plant in Panitan, Capiz would improve power supply in Panay Island, according to Panay diesel power plant manager Barbara J. Hontanosas.

The 15-MW modular power plant, located at the National Transmission Corp. substation in Barangay Tanque, would supplement power distributed by the Capiz Electric Cooperative (Capelco).

The new power plant would also boost supply in neighboring Aklan province.

Panay Island has a power supply shortage of 61.7 megawatts.

Felipe F. Calitis, Inquirer Visayas

■ SULU

Red Cross donates equipment to Sulu

THE PHILIPPINE National Red Cross (PNRC) donated a Hitachi Excavator to help restore water supply in the provincial government of Sulu, according to a press release.

The construction equipment, which was turned over by PNRC to the government of Sulu last June 19, will be used for the expansion of the provincial water system, infrastructure for school facilities and housing projects.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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Lira Jan Gonzaga
Baguio Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Ibaloi fear extinction, want to tell their stories

POSTWAR Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia searches for pictures of ancestors inside a community rice museum dedicated to Loakan's Ibaloi. The families donated their old album photos to the museum. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

By Vincent Cabreza
Baguio City

THE SUMMER CAPITAL'S IBALOI COMMUNITY has created its own museum, stocked with photographs and memorabilia of their ancestors, to tell anyone who may be interested why they are on the verge of "extinction."

The Center for Ibaloi Heritage and Loakan Memory is a living museum because the community is duty pledged to donate new photographs, artifacts and items in dominant what had languished in their lives after each year.

The center is being hosted by the Loakan Elementary School near the city's only airport in Barangay Loakan, about 5 km from downtown Baguio.

Descendants and relatives of Loakan's original Ibaloi families went to the school last month to witness the museum's very first exhibit... a historical inventory of Ibaloi-Ibaloi which were put up by Priscilla Carino Dulnuan for her master's thesis in cultural production at Ifugao's University in Massachusetts.

Dulnuan, executive director of the advocacy group, Ipanera Foundation, has pushed for the creation of the museum using her exhibit, saying Loakan is the perfect site to host Ibaloi memorabilia.

"At this one place, the Ibaloi were subjected to so many appropriations [by the American colonial government and the Philippine government]," she says.

She says the Ibaloi folk in Loakan first lost their farmlands to the Americans who wanted building stock. They gave up more rice fields so that the Americans could build the airport.

The Ibaloi lost hillsides overlooking superhighway and later to the government when it decided to build the Philippine Military Academy there.

The Ibaloi also lost vast vegetable lands when the government reinstalled the prisoners of Camp John Hay and built the Pinsao Proper by Loakan.

Ibaloi exhibited portraits of Ibaloi people during the 1900s, as well as a series of photographs depicting the construction of the airport...in till those tales.

Former Ifugao Mayor Virginia de Guia (seated) through the photographs, searching for a high school classmate with whom she has lost touch.

Loakan San Agustin, curator of the Baguio Heritage Museum, marveled at the artifacts that the community managed to keep intact, despite the fact that their families were slowly displaced from their ancestral homes.

A huge map has been pasted at the door of the school's library where the museum is located. Ibaloi says it shows just how little is left of Ibaloi lands in Loakan.

Ibaloi's exhibit begins with a large photograph of old Ibaloi sitting beside two trees. She says the photograph was symbolic because those trees still stand outside the gymnasium of the grade school.

"Right now the best is that the Ibaloi are getting extinct in Baguio. It is ruled. Meaning that 10 years after that memorable picture of proud Ibaloi [they would] disappear just like that," she says.

Baguio is celebrating its centennial in 2009 but it remains silent about plans commemorating the Ibaloi's legacy to the city.

"Most of the historical data [about the Ifugao Ibaloi] are done by people who are not from the place, so I the center hate] gives the community the opportunity to tell their own story and to make their own interpretations of that story," Ibaloi says.

Alaminos folk pool resources to raise 'bright kids'

By Yolanda Batalo-Fuertes
Alaminos City

IT IS SAID THAT IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RAISE a child. In the western Pangasinan city of Alaminos, the community, local government and the Department of Education have been pooling resources to ensure that they would raise "bright children."

The city launched the "Batgis Child" program three years ago after local educators found out that the performance of the city's elementary and high school students in the National Achievement Test (NAT) was, to say the least, dismal.

The scenario then: Students performed poorly in Mathematics, English and Science in the NAT, workbooks and reference materials in local schools were inadequate; there was lack of specialized instructional resources; and the high dropout rate was a problem.

There was also a high matriculation rate among pre-school and elementary students, shortage of day care centers, lack of sports facilities and lack of in-depth knowledge on the city's history and culture.

Bruno Peng, city schools superintendent, says that in the 2004 Grade 6 NAT, the division placed last among 11 divisions in the Ilocos region and 105th among 198 divisions in the country. The dropout rate for both elementary and high schools was also high, he says.

"There was a big need for interventions for the children's performance to improve," Alaminos Mayor Hernani Braganza says.

This situation moved the community to implement the Bright Child program to address the needs of the children to develop their potentials by providing clean conducive and quality education and better health and nutrition.

Braganza says Orpild on to ane cannot develop a "bright child."

"The support of the entire community, the local government and the parents will determine the future of a child," he says.

Three years later, the joint efforts started to show results.

During a recent education summit in the city, Peng reported that the division was "making strides in improving the achievement level of pupils."

In the 2005 NAT, the division ranked 6th and 8th in the elementary and secondary levels, respectively, in the Ilocos region.

Wide-ranging probe of Sulpicio shaping up

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

WASHINGTON (VA. FUTT)—A planned Philippine congressional inquiry into the sinking of the MV Princess of the Stars will be a wide-ranging probe that will look into the history of accidents that had plagued Sulpicio Lines, Press Secretary Jesse Robredo said yesterday.

The investigation has the blessings of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is currently visiting the United States.

Robredo said that Rep. Mercedes Fuentenilla and other congressmen accompanying Ms Arroyo on her trip had informed her about the planned probe of the House transportation committee.

"The President welcomes the initiative taken by the congressmen, who are in her delegation to going into an investigation," he said.

The other leaders of Congress in the President's party who are supporting the investigation are Deputy Speakers Raul del Mar and Giorlie Villarosa and Rep. Antonio Traseña, Traseña said.

Sulpicio Lines' history of tragedies and the Coast Guard's culpability will be examined in the probe, Traseña said.

"It's a wide-ranging investigation that will cover everything. It will cover go beyond just this incident but look into the previous history of Sulpicio Lines," Traseña said.

"Everybody, Coast Guard [will be investigated]," he added.

Marine inquiry

Officials refused to disclose exactly how many people were accompanying Ms Arroyo, but estimates ranged from 45 to 60.

Traseña, however, said their presence here was important in helping Ms Arroyo lobby the US Congress for the passage of the veterans equity bill that seeks to grant more benefits to Filipino veterans who fought under the American flag in World War II.

"Some of them wanted to go home, they were a little uneasy about being here [when there is a tragedy in the country] but they were prevailed upon to stay," he said.

In Manila, the Board of Marine Inquiry (BMI) was to hold its first formal hearing today and Tasil announced Sulpicio Lines first vice president Edgardo Go and maritime officials to appear.

BMI chair Rear Admiral Ramon Liwag said the board had also summoned Philippine Coast Guard officials and the port captain and safety officer of Sulpicio Lines.

Gonzalez's doubts

"We want to know if the vessel complied with the regulations," Liwag said in a phone interview.

Regarding the testimony of surviving passengers and crew members, Liwag said that would probably come later because many of them were still in provinces or were being treated for their injuries.

Despite the sinking of the MV Princess of the Stars was a "isolated tragedy," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez questioned the inclusion of officials of the Coast Guard and the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) in the task force to oversee the rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts of government.

Gonzalez noted that Task Force Princess of the Stars, headed by Transportation Undersecretary for Maritime Affairs Elena Sinaman, would also investigate the circumstances surrounding the latest disaster.

Unbiased probe

"We have no objection to the names mentioned as members of (the task force), but the Coast Guard is there and the Coast Guard is probably part of the probable probe that would be conducted, maybe Marina, etc.," Gonzalez said.

The Coast Guard has been criticized for allowing the 23,000-ton ship to sail despite the typhoon.

Gonzalez raised the issue during a Cabinet meeting presided over by Vice President Noli de Castro.

Gonzalez cited the need for "unbiased" investigation, saying the participation of officials of the sea agencies cast doubt on the credibility of the Palace-created body. With reports from Lelia E. Salaverria, Michael Lim Ubay and Norman Bordadora

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GMA gets US flag as sympathy gesture

Front page 1

day (Washington time), as the Willard Intercontinental hotel, where she and her party were billeted.

The dinner was attended by more than 20 members of the Philippine House of Representatives and a number of Arroyo Cabinet officials.

Sen. Harry Sield, the majority leader who helped push the passage of Senate Bill No. 1215 with a vote of 96-1 in April, received the award on behalf of the Senate.

Also on the list of recipients were Sen. Richard Lugar and Rep. Michael Hatch, who did not come.

Red sash, medallions

"The Order of the Golden Heart represents our nation's humble way of recognizing those who help give life to the noble aspirations of the Filipino people," Ms Arroyo said after putting the red sash and medallions on each of the awardees.

"We're here tonight to honor our distinct awardees with the Golden Heart award for their exemplary contributions to the US-Philippine relationship," Philippine ambassador Albert del Rosario said.

The Golden Heart award was given to those with a golden heart, one that radiates hope for our nation and our people," she said.

In a speech, Ms Arroyo also said relations between the Philippines and the United States would "always be close as well as special."

She said ABC made a survey in April of countries most supportive of the United States. "And you guessed it, Filipinos are, hands down, the most supportive nation of the US in the world," she said, adding:

"And so, on behalf of the 85 million Filipinos and their families and friends who make up the Filipino-American community, thank you for continuing the deep friendship."

White and black ice

In his acceptance speech, Sen. raised the subject of the sea tragedy.

"Today, because of the tragedy in the Philippines, we took the time to fly to the top of the Capitol to honor, memorize and prayers for the men and women either lost, recovered or trapped still in that ferry," he said.

Sen. one of the staunchest proponents of the Filipino veterans equity bill, passed to retrieve a package from his seat and then handed Ms Arroyo a white and black lace.

"I know the reprise is still smoky way so it's not a very good gift purchasing under the Senate rules, but it is the flag that was flown today over the Capitol for that reason," Sen. said.

In response, Ms Arroyo said:

"We do appreciate how you [Sen.] care about our Filipinos and we do hope, as you have said, that we will find more survivors. And thank you for all the support you have given.

"And I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everybody here in the Capitol, who has expressed sympathy and provided support for our efforts in the Philippines. We are very happy we have so many friends here in Washington."

US assistance

Negroponte and Ms Arroyo had a 30-minute meeting on Monday morning, after which they held a joint press conference outside the Willard.

President Negroponte, US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Press Secretary Jesse Dureza and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Ms Arroyo said:

"We were deeply saddened by the tragic loss of lives, particularly the tragedy of the sinking of the passenger ferry Princess of the Stars.

"Our American friends are here to announce emergency aid and assistance to help the Philippines in this hour of need. In the wake of this natural disaster, we have reported that even as we speak, a US ship is

The Philippine Navy hospital ship Dr. Jose Fabella and Tsunami medical team in Ulee Lheue harbour pictured by helping the Ulee Lheue people with their medical services. The program benefited 500 non-combatants and involved each operation by providing them with free medical check ups and medicines consisted of 93% program partners United Laboratories.

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Anglo Philippine Holdings Corporation

An enduring vision to help build the Filipino future

DEVELOPMENT GURU BY SANNY NASRIL AND IS defined to us varied ways as there are ideologies and advocacies through the decades.

For Anglo Philippine Holdings Corporation (APHC), development is what it takes to move a people – as a nation and as individuals – towards the future they envision and seek to build for themselves.

This was the spirit that gave birth to the company 30 years ago – enlivening the optimism of a fledgling republic then led by a near-megalomaniac confident generation. The same spirit has endured through five decades of the company's journey of exploration, adversity, discovery and direction.

Anglo Philippine Holdings Corporation, a successful investments holding firm celebrates its 50th anniversary today reaffirming its resolve to help build the Filipino future by remaining steadfast to its goals and steering the course through an economy to unlock resources, infrastructure and property development.

From a pioneering oil exploration company established in 1938, the company has grown into a major conglomerate with interests in high-profile infrastructure and property development projects. Its portfolio of investments reflects diverse business interests, from socially responsible mining operations to an efficient mass transit system, and encompasses a wide range of services that impact tremendously on the lives of millions of Filipinos.

"We take special pride in the role we played in the construction of Metro Rail Transit (MRT) project along EDSA," said Christopher Gotanco, president and chief operating officer of the holding company. "The MRT now carries over half a million commuters every single day, has reduced travel time by 50% between Pasay and North EDSA and back, and has helped spawn a cluster of new business districts that host five-star hotels, high-rise commercial buildings and sprawling malls in five major cities along the entire length of EDSA."

The Company maintains a 15.79% equity in the North Triangle Depot Commercial Corp. (NTDCC), which owns the TriNoma commercial center, a bustling new mall operated and managed by Ayala Land, Inc. located at the North Triangle depot of the MRT in time to Quezon City. The sprawling new shopping Mecca north of Metro Manila, which opened its doors to the public in May 2007, can be directly accessed by the MRT.

The APHC's other property development projects include a 4.5% equity in Shang Properties, Inc., (SPI), a merger between Eala Properties Holdings and Asiak Philippine Properties. SPI has stakes in the St. Francis Shangri-La Place, a high-rise upscale residential development project adjacent to the Shangri-La Plaza Mall. It has likewise acquired majority ownership of the Enterprise Center located at the Makati Central Business District.

Despite its success in infrastructure and property development projects, the APHC continues to nurture its interest in natural resources, the original business envisioned by its pioneering founders, among them Andres Soriano, Jr., Francisco Ortigas, Sr., Ernesto Rufino Sr. and their American partner, Howard Hick. Going public within a year of its birth in 1958, the company launched activities in oil exploration in the Cagayan Valley, Cebu, Catanduanes, Davao, Mindoro, and Panay at the height of a "mini oil boom in the 70s."

In the end-70s, without much success in oil exploration, the company diversified into magnetic steel mining in La Union, only to sink with oil exploration and offshore mining. By then, a new group of shareholders had come in led by Jose Ma. Hercules, a prominent stockbroker, and the company took on the corporate name Anglo Philippine Oil and Mining Corporation.

After a few years of "iron steel" mining, which was abruptly cut short by a Martial Law directive of then President Ferdinand Marcos, businessman Alfredo C. Ramos and stockbroker Emphraim C. Rotairan took over the Company and held over its remaining petroleum concessions.

The exploration efforts in the Philippines during this period would eventually result in the first-ever oil discovery in the country in 1970 by a Chiles Services-led consortium operating in offshore Southwest Palawan. This development opened the door to more explorations activities that would result in bigger oil and gas discoveries in the offshore Palawan basin.

Oil exploration being a highly speculative business though, the APHC never quite achieved its objective of finding oil in commercial quantity in the Philippines, unlike its offshore Philodrill which successfully struck the "black gold" in Nido and Matinloc fields off Palawan.

Triumph Chairman and CEO Alfredo C. Ramos, the APHC continues to invest in major oil and mineral exploration forays, including a substantial stake in Aban Consolidated Mining and Development Corporation (ACMDC), one of the country's most socially conscious and responsible mining firms.

The Company's well-placed investments yielded significant increases in earnings, with 2007 continuing the uptrend, with 24% and 60% increases over 2006 and 2005 figures, respectively. Earnings per share (EPS) likewise improved to P9.47 in 2007, up by 27% from 2006 and +25% from 2005, on a Par Value of P1.00 per share. With its significant earnings and liquidity, the Company declared dividends for the first time in 2007. To date, it has already declared dividends twice in the past year and again early in 2008.

As the company marks its 50th year, the blueprint for a more up-by its forward-looking pioneers becomes even more distinct and clear, not just in terms of profitability, but in the genuine spirit of its long and rich mission of "Helping Build the Filipino Future" giving more substance and meaning to its corporate achievement and social responsibility to forge a better future for everyone.

Company founders Andres Soriano, Jr. (center), extreme left; Howard R. Hick (seated), second from right; Ernesto Rufino, Sr. (standing, second from left); and Francisco Ortigas, Sr. (standing, extreme right) witness the signing of a petroleum concession contract granted to the Company in the late 1950s by the Philippine Government, as represented by then Secretary Juan de G. Rodrigues of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Anglo Philippine Holding's directors and officers: (Seated, L-r) Presentacion S. Ramos, Director; augusto B. Santos, Director; Alfredo C. Ramos, Chairman; Christopher M. Gotanco, President; Ramon del. C. Abad, Independent Director; and Roberto V. San Jose, Director and Corporate Secretary; (standing, L-r) Adrian S. Ardiz, Executive Vice President and Assistant Corporate Secretary; Francisco A. Navarro, Director; Adrian S. Ramos, Director; Victor S. Benavidez, Director; Patrick F. Cavili, Director; Renato C. Valencia, Independent Director; and Emmanuel P. Rodriguez, Vice President for Finance and Administration.

VISION

We envision our company as a leading publicly listed holding firm with a balanced portfolio of investments in natural resources, infrastructure and property development. Through these investments, we aim to contribute to the task of building the Filipino future.

MISSION

We enable our stakeholders to participate in the growth and profit potentials of our chosen investment sectors, consistent as we are of our obligation to create and enhance shareholder value.

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We support infrastructure and property development projects that would enhance the quality of life of the Filipino people, especially the poorest.

Clockwise from right: Enterprise Center, Ayala Mine Site, Poleward Oil Drilling, Shangri-La Plaza

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Aplus METRO
Editor Emer G. Dipasupil

New extension sought for dump use

Makati mayor orders unloading of city garbage at MMDA doorstep

By Beverly T. Mamicpic and DJ Yap

MANDALUYONG MAYOR BENHUR ABALOS yesterday asked the Rizal provincial government to let the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority continue dumping garbage in its 19-hectare sanitary landfill in Rodriguez town until the agency finds alternative dumping grounds.

Abalos said they will ask Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares Jr. to give another 45-day provincial permit to the MMDA to use a garbage site.

"We are now appealing individually to Rizal to allow us to temporarily dump garbage at the Rodriguez landfill until we find solutions to this problem," Abalos told the Inquirer.

Abalos said he and the mayors of other cities in Metro Manila were surprised when Ynares announced on Monday that the provincial government would no longer accept garbage coming from the metropolis.

According to Ynares, the 45-day permit earlier issued to the MMDA expired on Saturday and it was now up to the Rizal provincial board to decide whether or not it would continue to let the agency dump garbage in the landfill which is supposed to be for the province's exclusive use.

"We are trying to reach out. Of course, we are not imposing ourselves here. We respect the autonomy of Rizal but the owners of mines give us no choice," he added.

Abalos said he is now coordinating with Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, who heads the Metro Manila Mayors' League, in a bid to convene a crisis session among Metro mayors.

Meanwhile, Makati City officials literally seized a stink about Metro Manila's garbage woes by abandoning trucks with full loads of trash around the MMDA headquarters.

In a "crash-for-cash" protest to draw attention to the garbage problem, city waste collectors, on orders of Mayor Jejomar Binay, left some 60 dump trucks which they parked around the MMDA building at the corner of Ortigas Street and Edsa at midnight Monday.

Danilo Milan, chief of Makati's environmental services department, said the move was meant to compel the MMDA to find a long-term solution to Metro Manila's garbage problems.

Workers and employees, with families in tow, protested in front of the MMDA building, demanding that the agency find a new dumping site.

"Unless and until we have a new dumping site, we will not allow any garbage truck to enter the premises of the MMDA," Milan said.

An MMDA employee who did not want to be identified for fear of losing her job said the march was so bad she could smell it from inside a canteen with its windows and doors shut.

"Coming from Pasay or approaching Mandaluyong, there were so many dump trucks on the first lane of the yellow lane. The smell was terrible. It became worse when we reached Ortigas," the employee said.

"This is a wake-up call to the MMDA," said Milan. "Local government units have long sought a permanent solution to the problem, but little has been done."

Binay is a statement issued by the city's

refer a.m.

ZOO ATTRACTION
Visitors to the Manila Zoo are mesmerized by the sight of Mali, an elephant who seems to enjoy the attention. The two-ton animal is entertaining visitors today as part of the Animal Appreciation celebration. (AMA, DJY)

DID YOU KNOW

THE DEPARTMENT of Health, which holds offices at the San Lazaro compound in Sta. Cruz, Manila, traces its beginnings to the 22nd of June in 1898, when then President Emilio Aguinaldo issued a proclamation creating the Department of Public Welfare, Education and Hygiene. It has been renamed and reorganized as the Bureau of Health, Bureau of Health, Philippine Health Service, Department of Health and Public Welfare and Ministry of Health. *Cyd Eleandro Jayme Resuello*

Dr. Josefina Suarez left an administrative post to start the Elizabeth Seton School in Manila. Armed with her integrity and upright character, Dr. Suarez established a Catholic school providing quality education for the nation's youth. Indeed she is an excellent role model for the new generation.

Dr. Suarez's desire to make education available for all has now gone beyond the halls of the respected institution that she built. For seven years running, the Elizabeth Seton School champions an outreach program that assists the Mike Sell Elementary School in Las Piñas, a place of learning for underprivileged kids.

A deep sense of integrity and purpose was what BPI Family Savings Bank first spotted in Dr. Suarez when she applied for a loan. And through the years, Dr. Suarez has since been a loyal client, maintaining an impeccable credit standing and track record. Uprightness and reliability indeed go a long way.

A word of advice from the good educator to new entrepreneurs? *"Never be afraid to pursue your dreams and always put your integrity and beliefs above all."*

BPI Family Savings Bank champions the virtues of everyday men and women like Dr. Josefina Suarez, who got started on their tomorrows through home grown values and with the help of BPI Family Savings Bank. Grow your SME business loan. It is our honor to be a part of these people's triumphs because Character is still the Best Capital. It is a lesson in integrity demonstrated by Dr. Josefina Suarez.

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Bodies of three missing boat passengers found

By Beverly T. Mahinicud

RECOVERED YESTERDAY FOUND the bodies of three of five missing passengers of a boat that capsized at the height of Typhoon "Frank" in San Mateo, Rizal province on Sunday.

Jun Sinlaucio, Vic Galicon and Tomas Cayanan were found in Barangay Dulong Bayan, two days after they were reported missing.

According to the Rizal Provincial Disaster Coordination Center (PDCC) and the San Mateo Municipal Disaster Coordination Center (MDCC), barangay officials and rescuers from the Coast Guard and provincial government are still looking for the remaining two missing passengers.

They were identified as Lanipping Bebula and Ellen Bagatan.

The five were among 12 people who set out in a boat to cross the Tersona River at around 3 p.m. Sunday.

As the time, rains brought on by Frank had caused the river to swell, leaving the Tersona Bridge underwater and making it impassable.

Six of the 12 passengers were immediately rescued. The body of a missing passenger, Cherry Calerdas, was found on Monday.

IMPROMPTU BATH Residents "baptize" passengers of a passing jeepney on Mr. Domingo Street in San Juan City which entertained the boats day of St. John the Baptist yesterday. NOEL ALFECHE

2 men charged for using fake credit cards

By Allison W. Lopez

TWO GHANA NATIONALS WERE allegedly used fake credit cards to buy nearly P900,000 worth of computers on the Internet have been charged in the Manila Regional Trial Court with credit card violation of the access device regulation act.

The charges against Isaac Eli Bonsu, 26, and Adjei Asiedu Isaac, 29, both tenants of Unit Room no 1403 J. Zamora St. Pasay, Manila, were based on the complaint of Quho PC Technologies Marketing, a company selling computers.

An investigation conducted by the Anti-Transnational Crime Division (ATCD) of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) showed that the two men bought online several computers worth more than P900,000 from Quho.

The transactions were carried between April 28 and May 2 with the accused using 10 different credit cards to pay for the computers.

Quho personnel, however, became suspicious when they noticed that all the orders were being delivered to just one place.

A check with Equitable BBO Bank showed that the suspects' MasterCard and American Express credit cards had been used before no fraudulent transactions.

The two were later arrested by police operatives in an entrapment operation.

1 dead, another hurt in mortar shell blast

By Beverly T. Mahinicud

A MORTAR SHELL EXPLODED in Barangay Barangka Ibaba in Mandaluyong City yesterday, leaving a man dead and another one injured.

Lawrence Garcia, 31, died from deepened wounds when a 81 mm mortar shell exploded while it was being cut by a worker at around 11:30 a.m. at the site of a new Makati-Mandaluyong bridge which is under construction.

Guillermo Gerente, an employee of 710 Construction Specialist, was seriously injured and taken to the Mandaluyong Medical Center.

Senior Supt. Carlos de Ocampo, Mandaluyong police chief, told the Inquirer that Antonio was trying to cut open the mortar casing using an acetylene torch when it suddenly went off.

Garcia, a bystander, was hit by shrapnel and killed.

De Ocampo said initial investigation showed that Gerente, who was among those working on the bridge that will connect Mandaluyong City to Bacharel in Makati City, unearthed the mortar while digging near Nadi's fish sauce refinery.

De Ocampo said the explosion was so strong that they found shrapnel about 300 meters away from the construction site.

He added that he has ordered all diggings stopped in the area until it has been declared safe by a police explosives team.

A POLICEMAN examines pieces of a mortar shell unearthed by a worker in Mandaluyong City yesterday. CHARLIE VILLANUEVA

NBI to go after film pirates caught operating inside movie houses

By Allison W. Lopez

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation (NBI) has deployed agents to monitor complaining activities in cinemas after it was asked by producers and theater owners to help in the arrest and prosecution of film pirates.

NBI Field Operations Division head Agent Richard Arpon said the agency's intelligence units would coordinate with the Motion Picture Anti-Film Piracy Council Inc. (MPAP) in curbing flicker or camcorder piracy by arresting and charging the suspects.

"The underground practice has severely affected the local movie industry.

Arpon said they began holding around 10 operations to check cinemas in Manila, after the two agencies joined forces at a seminar last week at Club Filipino to discuss ways to stop film piracy.

The council, in its letter to the NBI, said it was concerned about the "rampant camcording activities in cinemas, where films are recorded while being shown, then copied on disks and later sold to the public, all without the knowledge of the film owners."

Technology assisted Arpon, but made it more difficult to detect pirates who are able to sneak in the smallest camcorders inside cinemas.

Local movie producers have complained that profits have gone down as pirated movie titles are increasing distributed from 1,200 to 4,000 a year.

Fake DVD copies of the latest movies are sold for as low as P25-P40, while the price of a movie ticket costs at least P180, Arpon also added.

Though no arrests have been made for unauthorized recording of movies, Arpon also said they would persist in their efforts to help the MPAP in going after film pirates, especially those working with big-time syndicates.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Caraga Administrative Region
Butuan City

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Caraga Administrative Region (Regional Office), through its Bids and Awards Committee, now accepts applications, invites to apply for eligibility and to submit bids/quotations for the following:

NAME OF PROJECT | Supply and Delivery of Computers and Computer Technology Digital Laboratory
ABC, in PHP/Peso | P2,000 Budget (R.A. No. 9970, upon the enactment of Congressional Session 2)
APPROVED BUDGET | FIVE MILLION PESOS (P5,000,000)
CONTRACT DURATION | Sixty Calendar Days (120) Calendar Days
DELIVERY SITES | Three (3) Regional Office Incident Areas (See schedule of requirements of the Bidding Documents)

PARTICULARS | QTY | DESCRIPTION
1 Lot | Desktop Computers with the following specifications:
INTEL CORE 2 DUO 3.0 GHZ
INTEL DG33TL MOTHERBOARD
2GB DDR2 SDRAM, 1066 MHZ PC 8500
320GB SATA HARD DISK
LG 16X DVD WRITER
DVD-ROM Optical Drive
17" LCD Monitor (1440 x 900 native resolution)
Windows Vista Business Edition
3 YEARS ONSITE WARRANTY
Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS)
Information Technology Digital Language Instruction Laboratory (IT Station)

Interested Bidders:
Please visit our office for further inquiries.
Bidding Documents consist of:
Terms and Conditions (Contract)
Technical Specifications
Schedule of Requirements
Bidding Forms
Eligibility Requirements
Bid Form
Bid Security
Contract Agreement
Bid Data Sheet
General Instructions
Special Conditions of Contract
Checklist of Bidding Documents

All documents comprising the bid (eligibility and technical components) shall be duly signed by the duly authorized representative of the bidder, and each and every page thereof shall be initialed by the duly authorized representative/s of the bidder.

Bidders shall provide adequate proof of their eligibility to bid, by submitting the necessary documents, as specified in the Philippine Bidding Documents (PBDs), which shall be part of the bid. Bidders shall submit their bids through their duly authorized representatives using the forms specified in the PBDs in the address below on or before the date and time indicated below.

Bidders should have completed within the period specified in the Philippine Bidding Documents (PBDs), a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Philippine Bidding Documents (PBDs).

Bidders may purchase the complete Philippine Bidding Documents from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Philippine Bidding Documents in the amount of FIVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P5,500.00).

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) at www.philgeps.gov.ph.

The Department of Education, Caraga Regional Office reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, and to accept the bid or bids as may best serve its interest. Bidders shall not be allowed to withdraw their bids during the validity period specified in the Philippine Bidding Documents (PBDs), and failure to enter into contract within the said period shall result in the forfeiture of the bid security.

Date: MARIO M. M. MARKUS, CESO V
Regional Director
DepED Caraga

FOR THE BAC CHAIRMAN:
Chief, Administrative Division
BAC Vice-Chairman

Activities | DATE and TIME | VENUE
Posting of Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid | June 25, 2008 to July 2, 2008 | DepED Caraga Regional Office, Butuan City
Pre-bid Conference | July 2, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. | DepED Caraga Regional Office, Butuan City
Deadline for submission of bids | July 10, 2008 at 10:00a.m. | DepED Caraga Regional Office, Butuan City
Opening of Bids | July 10, 2008 at 10:01 a.m. | DepED Caraga Regional Office, Butuan City
Post-qualification | July 10, 2008 to July 15, 2008 | DepED Caraga Regional Office, Butuan City

New . . . from page A11

public affairs office, wondered "why the MMDA cannot resolve the issue regarding Montalban (now Rodriguez) where they have the lands for it."

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando was not amused by Medard's move, said Robert Sison, the agency's general manager.

He said Makati officials know fully well that there were other dumping grounds for their garbage, including sanitary landfills in Pier 18, Navotas, San Pedro, Laguna and Sto.tagang Bulacan, among others.

Nacionales took exception to the suggestion that the MMDA was not doing anything to address the problem, noting that the agency now had four in five sanitary landfills to accommodate garbage.

"We've never had a situation where trash littered the streets, and that's not likely to even happen," he said.

Villar said the trucks had been turned away at the Rodriguez landfill Monday morning, leaving the drivers no choice to where to dump their load.

Alerted on what happened, a miffed Binay, who has been vocal in criticizing the MMDA's waste management policies, gave the order to the truck drivers to surround the agency, he added.

As of mid-yesterday, MMDA personnel had towed more than 40 of the garbage trucks to the impounding station in Pasig City, while the rest remained parked around the MMDA offices.

Nacionales said the agency would make no move of its own to dump the contents of the trucks into a sanitary landfill, and "it would be up to the owners to claim" the vehicles.

According to Villar, there were even reports that some MMDA men fired guns to scare the truck drivers and assaulted at least two of them, Arancho Segovia and Joseph Alejandro of RTM Fossil Waste Management.

The trucks also allegedly sustained damage, such as broken windshields, while the MMDA personnel were towing the vehicles.

Villar said although he was aware that there could be no real "permanent" solution to any garbage problem considering that every landfill had a lifespan, this did not mean reconciliation could be found.

In the meantime, he said he has ordered his men to go around barangays to ask residents to keep their garbage inside the house while arrangements are being made as to what dump to use.

A meeting was tentatively scheduled today among officials of the local provincial government, MMDA and Metro mayors to try to resolve the problem.

MetroBriefs

Baby's body found on top of trash mound

THE BODY of a newborn baby was found on top of a mound of trash in Sta. Mesa, Manila, early yesterday morning, Chief Insp. Dominador Amorao, head of the Manila Police District homicide division, said the baby girl was discovered by a scavenger around 7:30 a.m. on top of a heap of garbage at the corner of Ramon Magsaysay Avenue and Blumentritt Streets. The scavenger told police that he was sifting through the garbage when he noticed a styrofoam box. When he opened it, he said he found the body of a baby wrapped in a newspaper and yellow plastic bag. The baby, who had a nearly cut umbilical cord, police added. Last week, three babies were allegedly thrown away in three different areas of Manila. One was thrown out from the window of a condominium unit in Binondo, the other in a canal in Sta. Mesa and another from a speeding taxi cab in Pasig. While the third baby was already survived, the two others were found dead.

Tarra L. Santos

Construction worker killed, 2 more hurt

A 29-YEAR-OLD construction worker was killed while two others were seriously wounded when at least 10 men armed with knives and guns attacked them as they were drinking before dawn yesterday in Novaliches, Quezon City, Erwin Manalang, a laborer of the TTC Construction and a resident of Caloocan City, was declared dead on arrival at the Quezon City General Hospital from gunshot wounds to the chest. His coworkers, Alvin Lumangay, 28, and Ricardo Coronel, 21, remain hospitalized for bullet wounds and knife wounds they sustained during the attack. Reports from the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU) said the incident happened at at round 1:30 a.m. yesterday outside the victims' quarters on Bethesda Street, Tiwalo Subd in Barangay San Agustin. PO3 Joseph Cifra of the QCPD-CIDU said the workers had been hired to lay pipes on the street for Maynilad Water Services Inc. The three men were drinking with other coworkers when around 10 men threw bottles and stones at them. When the victims stepped out of their barracks, they were attacked by the group with knives and improvised shotguns. Cifra said that the motive for the attack remains unclear with QCPD-CIDU personnel conducting their investigation.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Man electrocuted in Quezon City

A MAN was electrocuted when he attempted to scale an electrically charged wire fence in Quezon City yesterday morning. Glenn Rebic, 31, a resident of Walang Walang Street, Botanical Garden, Barangay Central in Diliman, was found lying face down on the ground outside the fence with blood oozing from his ears. PO3 Joseph Cifra of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU) said Rebic was found by his cousin, Roger Caballing, at around 6:30 a.m. yesterday on the backyard of the house where the victim's mother's house. Cifra added that Caballing was then rushed to Jose Rebic by bringing him to the East Avenue Medical Center, but the victim was pronounced dead on arrival by attending doctors.

Jeannette I. Andrade

'100 Nudes/100 Years' art exhibit extended

THE "100 NUDES/100 YEARS" art exhibit has been extended until Saturday, June 28, at the Blanchette Brennan Gallery at Bellarmine Hall, Ateneo de Centro, Quezon City. The exhibit is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Gen Tiongco, University of the Philippines Diliman and UP Alumni Association president, said the exhibit has attracted an average of 200 visitors a day. The art show features paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints created by UP graduates, among them National Artists Napoleon Veloso Abueva, Fernando Zobel Ancheta, Benedicto Reyes Cabrera, Carlos Villatuz Francisco, Abdulmoan Wale Imao, Jose Tence Joya Jr., Cesar Severino Legaspi, Nicanor Silva Maravenia and the sculptor of the Oblation himself, Guillermo Camba Tolentino.

Pentagon: Security gains in Iraq still 'fragile, reversible'

WASHINGTON—SECURITY continued to improve in Iraq from March to May result ing in a net increase in overall security over the last four months, but the gains are "fragile, reversible and uneven," a quarterly Pentagon report said on Monday.

Other government findings said conditions in the violence torn nation remained volatile and that Iraqi units continued to rely heavily on US and coalition forces, an US Military Chief Michael Hayden warned that, while the situation has improved, there was still plenty of work in the battle against Iraqi insurgents.

"The security, political and economic trends in Iraq remain on a roller coaster; however, their overall trajectory remains fragile, reversible and uneven. Recent events in Iraq, Sadr City and elsewhere have presented new challenges and opportunities for the Iraqi state," the Pentagon report said.

"The security environment in Iraq continues to improve, with all-major violence indicators reduced between 40 and 60 percent from previous levels," it said.

"Total security incidents have fallen to their lowest level in over four years."

The Pentagon also hailed the "increased" challenge by the Iraqi security forces, who with US support are battling Shiite militias in Iraqi cities and towns.

Another report published on the same day by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted a drop in violence but stressed that "the security environment remains volatile and dangerous" and that "many unmet goals and challenges remain" from the security to the political bureau.

AFP

Fair Zimbabwe polls impossible, says UN

UNITED NATIONS—THE UN Security Council declared on Monday that a free and fair run-off presidential election in Zimbabwe would be impossible now due to violence and restrictions on the opposition.

The unanimous statement, the council's first formal action on Zimbabwe, was adopted amid a bitter row between the UN backing of South Africa, Ghana and Russia, which had long opposed any actual discussion of the crisis in Zimbabwe.

"The Security Council regrets that the campaign of violence and the restrictions on the political opposition have made it impossible for a free and fair election to take place on June 27," the statement said.

But Zimbabwe's UN envoy said the vote would go ahead despite the statement. "As far as we are concerned, the election will take place on Friday," Boniface Chidyausiku told reporters.

The Security Council vote was watered down from an earlier version, which explicitly blamed President Robert Mugabe's government for the crisis and said opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai would be the legitimate leader if a credible runoff election cannot be held.

However, the final version says the council "notes that the results of the 29 March 2005 elections stand for respectively Tsvangirai won that first round election, though the government said his narrow victory meant a runoff was necessary.

The council has discussed the Zimbabwe crisis on several occasions but had taken no formal action since violence broke out after Mugabe lost on March 29.

This was because of objections from South Africa, a council member, which has insisted on "quiet diplomacy" with Mugabe's government, with the support of Russia and China.

Earlier UN Secretary General Kofi Annan urged Zimbabwe's government not to press ahead with a runoff election this week, saying the results would lack legitimacy.

"I would strongly discourage the authorities from going ahead with the runoff on Friday," he told reporters. "It will only deepen divisions within the country and produce a result that cannot be credible."

Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

Thai bomb blasts

YALA, Thailand—Two bombs planted on a football field and a busy market injured seven soldiers and six civilians in Thailand's insurgency-hit far south on Tuesday, police said. Explosives hidden in a motorcycle exploded outside a fresh food market in Yala's provincial capital early Tuesday, injuring 6 people including four soldiers, a police said. Two soldiers on a motorcycle were injured by a roadside bomb in Yala province. Later that same morning in nearby Pattani province, a blast into a village football field, injuring three soldiers who were on duty there.

AFP

Taiwan's Ma loses case

TAIPEI—A Taiwanese court official says President Ma Ying-jeou has lost a defamation case against a former political opponent. Ma sued former Democratic Progressive Party presidential candidate Frank Hsieh over comments Hsieh made during an interview in which Hsieh alleged Ma had embezzled public funds while serving as Taipei mayor between 1998 and 2006. Taipei District Court spokesperson Lin Shiow-tsang says the court found Hsieh not guilty of slandering Ma in the Tuesday ruling. Ma was inducted in February 2006 charged with diverting NT$11 million (US$341,200) of public money into his private account. He was acquitted of all charges.

AFP

Sharif barred

LAHORE—A Pakistani court dismissed former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Monday from contesting a by-election for a seat in the National Assembly late this week, deepening political uncertainty in the country.

Sharif's brother Shahbaz, a minister in eight years in military dictator, he has been a global draw to his attempts to drive his country. President Pervez Musharraf, from power. Sharif was barred from running in a general election in February because he had been convicted of hijacking Musharraf's plane, an action that triggered the military coup that sacked the PM.

Reuters

Prosecutor charged

JAKARTA—A senior Indonesian prosecutor was charged on Tuesday with receiving $300,000 in order to drop a major embezzlement case, as he appeared in court for the first time. The 51 businessman is the first prosecutor to be charged in the corruption scandal that has undermined efforts to reform Indonesia. Senior Attorney General Honorable Supandi Gunawan is one of several prosecutors whose secretly taped conversations about investigations have been played during the corruption trial of businessman Andrian Herling Gunardi. Gunardi is allegedly bribed Gunawan to drop a probe into Sjamsul Nurualam, one of Indonesia's richest men who is accused of embezzling some $3 billion in money-by-bailed loans he his bank during the Asian crisis in 1998.

AP

ROBIN CRUSOE ICON An artwork by Argentine-born artist Leo Portal called "Robinsoe.com internet crisis (Western Civilisation)" hangs from the ceiling of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney on June 14. The work features a sculpted figure of Christ mounted on a crucifix and replica of a United States F4-16 fighter jet.

AFP

EU states back new sanctions vs Iran

BRUSSELS—EUROPEAN UNION states agreed on Monday to impose new sanctions against Iran, including on assets frozen on its biggest bank, over its refusal to meet demands to curb its nuclear program.

But the European Union said the door remained open to possible talks over an international package of incentives offered to Tehran earlier this month by EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana for Iran to suspend uranium enrichment.

The new EU sanctions are the latest attempt by the West to put pressure on Iran over the nuclear issue and will target businesses and individuals the bloc alleges are linked to its nuclear and ballistic programs.

"The individuals will be banned from entering the EU and the assets will be banned from operating in the EU," said an EU official, who wanted to remain anonymous, after EU ministers ratified stamped the measures at a meeting in Luxembourg.

The European Union was due to publish the names of those affected on Tuesday but the official said Bank Melli would face an asset freeze under the moves, while the bloc has would target "key senior experts" inside Iranian nuclear and ballistic programs.

"Iran's [nuclear] bid [is] seen as a positive impetus," Iranian analyst Saeed Leylaz said of the impact on Iran of the issue against Bank Melli, a key supplier of export guarantees.

"The economy of Iran will be more dependent on Chinese markets," he added of a growing shift in Iran's focus to Asia that has seen Europe's share of the Islamic Republic's trade dwindle to 25-30 percent from more than five years ago.

The European countries follow a similar US asset freeze imposed on Bank Melli last year and a series US Treasury edicts, hailed them as another step in isolating Tehran from the international financial system.

"Now that you have begun to slip stepping up and trying to take tangible action, it really underscores the fact that it isn't just the US that's doing it," said Daniel Glaser, assistant secretary for terrorist financing and financial crimes.

Reuters

Astronomical clues point to eclipse in 'Odyssey'

WASHINGTON—ASTRONOMERS found in Homer's "The Odyssey" could help confirm a total solar eclipse when Odysseus returned home, providing a potentially accurate timeline for the fall of Troy, two scientists reported on Monday.

Historians and classicists for centuries have debated the eclipse hypothesis in the ancient Greek poet's epic work, considering only rarely that no such reference exists in either "The Odyssey" or its predecessor, "The Iliad."

But a new study of "The Odyssey" by Mostafa Magnasco, of Rockefeller University, and Constantino Tsallakanos of the Observatorio Astronomico in La Plata, Argentina, turned up hereto overlooked celestial clues that together could clear up the historical period, the scientists report in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The clues, they claim, provide corroborating evidence of a solar eclipse when Odysseus returned home to murder the suitors who had taken advantage of his long absence to court his wife.

The first clue is the description of a new moon on the day of Odysseus' return, which is a prerequisite for a total solar eclipse.

Six days before the massacre, Homer wrote, Venus shone brightly high in the sky; 20 days earlier, he said the Pleiades and Hyades constellations were also visible at sunset; and finally, 10 days before the massacre, he suggested Mercury was high at dawn and near the western end of its trajectory.

These four celestial indicators appear to occur in exactly the same timeframe, the researchers looked for a period within 100 years of the fall of Troy that would fit the astronomical pattern they had discovered.

There was only one date: April 16, 1178 B.C.

The date could potentially help historians date the fall of Troy, which was purported to occur around the time of the events described in "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey."

AFP

Thai PM faces more criticism

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S PRIME minister faced more criticism on Tuesday with the lower house of parliament set to consider a no confidence motion, but his government said it was confident he would keep his job.

Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej was defiant during the opening round of the debate which was sure brought by the opposition in the Senate on Monday after four weeks of street protests calling for the government to resign.

"Do not mess with someone like himself" the prime minister angrily told the assembly.

Demonstrators led by members of the People's Alliance for Democracy continue to occupy the area around Government House, the seat of Thailand's government, since breaking through a police cordon on May 30.

They accuse Samak's five-month-old government of being a puppet of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a 2006 military coup.

AP

Zimbawe City Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(ZAMCELCO)
Mt'cc, Highway, Profit, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Profit, Ma. city per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, bid bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials, to wit:

No.	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	48,000	LATHS	DUPLEX SLIGHTS HANG, A/P, P 24.74
2	70	PCS	MOTORMEGGA A/P, P 1,215.00
3	114	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE, 5/8 X 10-1/4, P 95.25
4	114	PCS	BRACKET, DE-ENERGIZING HANG, A/P, P 88.00
5	114	PCS	INSULATOR, DEPOSIT, 15 KV, A/P, P 36.00
6	114	PCS	INSULATOR, LOCK SET, A/P, P7.13
7	114	LOTS	INSULATOR, SUSPENSION, 2 1/4 IN, SOLID, P 177.13

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements and no less than 9:00 a.m. of June 23, 2006 and no documents pertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly thereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on July 10, 2006.

Bidders fail to duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Project Department at the above-stated address on or before 10:00 a.m. of July 05, 2006. Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right is reserved only in all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the entity is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

Atty. ERNESTO S. SANTOS
General Manager

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Budget and Management
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Description	ABC	Amount of Bidders Bid Security
Supply and Delivery of Computer Hardware and Peripherals	Php 2,000,000.00	Php 40,000.00
Supply, Delivery and Installation of Computer Hardware	Php 800,000.00	Php 16,000.00

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount stated above.

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System and the website of the Department of Budget and Management, provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m. of July 10, 2006. Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the opening of bids may do so.

Bidders must submit a valid Mayor's/Business Permit issued by the city or municipality where the principal place of business of the prospective bidder is located.

Bidders must submit a valid Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License and Registration for the type and cost of the contract to be bidded.

Bidders must submit a valid Tax Clearance per Executive Order 398, series of 2005, as finally reviewed and approved by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Bidders must submit a valid Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years.

Bidders must submit a valid Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Ongoing and Awarded Contracts.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Net Financial Contracting Capacity.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Single Largest Completed Contract.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Key Personnel.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Equipment.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Labor Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Environmental Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Tax Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Money Laundering Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Terrorism Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Trafficking in Persons Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Child Labor Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Discrimination Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Harassment Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Retaliation Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Whistleblower Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Fraud and Abuse Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Money Laundering Laws.

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Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Whistleblower Laws.

Bidders must submit a valid Statement of Compliance with Anti-Fraud and Abuse Laws.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

Obama's race a US campaign issue –poll

PENSACOLA, FLA.—DEMOCRAT BARACK OBAMA'S RACE will complicate his White House bid, Americans say in both interviews and a poll showing that nearly a third of them acknowledge feeling racial prejudice.

In interviews with Reuters, some Americans endorsed the findings of the Washington Post-ABC News survey, published on Sunday, showing that race relations in the United States were improving but problems persist.

An Illinois senator who would become the first African American to be elected US president, Obama said on Friday he expects Republicans to highlight the fact that he is black to try to make voters afraid of him.

Nearly half of those surveyed said race relations were in bad shape. Three in 10 acknowledged feelings of racial prejudice.

The survey was meant to help gauge the effect of both race and age on the November election in which Obama and Republican John McCain are vying to succeed Republican President George W. Bush.

McCain, who will be 72 in August, could be the oldest elected first-term US president. But age was a more pronounced concern than Obama's race, the survey found.

The 46-year-old Obama, born to a white mother from Kansas and a black father from Kenya, has said himself as a candidate who can bridge divides within the country, including those involving race.

"America cares a long way but it's still not where it should be," said actor Samy Alkanan, who lives and works in southern Arizona. "Even though there are no more lynchings, it's still at the back of people's minds. There's still prejudice."

Some 51 percent of those surveyed said race relations were excellent or good, but the gap between white and black views on race was the widest since polls dating to 1992, with blacks holding more negative views, according to the survey.

Pollsters say more respondents appear to moderate their views to avoid revealing bias in a country with divisions over slavery and racial discrimination dating back to more than 230 years ago. *Reuters*

OBAMA

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Tap seeds march on
/A29

SPORTS
Editor Toddpric S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

43 days to the 29th Summer Olympics

Manny arrives in Las Vegas

SLIMMER, FITTER Manny Pacquiao bridges up before the long trip to Las Vegas.

Drakulich ring's third man again

By Roy Luarca

LAS VEGAS—AFTER A BRIEF WORKOUT, a power handyman reduces his old user locker anything to rot and a four-hour, 400-kilometer road trip from Los Angeles, Manny Pacquiao and his entourage walked into this glitzy desert gambling haven in a 15-vehicle convoy Monday night.

Pacquiao checked into the Mandalay Bay hotel—whose Events Center will serve as the venue for his bid to annex the lightweight belt from current WBC champion David Diaz—earlier and hungry after the long trip.

The journey is part of a preflight routine the Filipino ring icon refuses, apparently for superstitious reasons, to depart from.

Pacquiao has been offered once before to make the trip via a chartered plane, but the super featherweight champion always picks the road. And despite a packed and draining schedule, he made to the routine, leading off the convoy with relic Drakie in his Lincoln Navigator.

Diaz, on the other hand, arrived later in the night by plane.

Pacquiao did not eat lunch after his last sparring and workout in the Wild Card Gym in Hollywood and neither did he—much to his glee during the press conference for the June 28 bout.

And from trainer Freddie Roach's point of view, Pacquiao's last Los Angeles workout showed just how prepared he is for the match.

"Pacquiao has done everything he should," Roach told reporters before leaving Hollywood. "I just hope he doesn't leave [anything to] the gym."

Pacquiao sparred with Julio Cambos over four rounds at the packed, sweaty Wild Card gym early in the day trying around with the junior welterweight before assaulting a barrage of punches that buckled the bleacher-users knees.

Pacquiao completed his workout with a leisurely that made it seem like he was making up for his dayoff on Sunday, before heading off

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DAVID Diaz ready to apply pressure.

Diaz fight plan: Mirror Pacquiao style

By Roy Luarca

SANTA MONICA—If DAVID DIAZ IS TO be believed, the relentless barrage with which Manny Pacquiao instantly overwhelms foes to intimidation is exactly what the Filipino will have a taste of during their World Boxing Council lightweight duel on June 28.

"Pressure," Diaz said, reiterating a game plan heard on the belief that Pacquiao normally takes passive after unloading punches with his blinding hand speed. "(I plan to) just go out there and apply more pressure."

The 5-foot-6 Diaz believes that from the quiet posture will give him the chance to let the Filipino champion lose a taste of his own medicine, citing the fact that he feels he is in better shape than the reigning WBC super featherweight king.

Diaz, in fact, has lost count of the rounds of sparring he completed against four partners in Orange's 2000 Gym.

"Maybe a thousand," Diaz said in jest. "But I did 6, 10, 12 rounds at least three times a week."

Meanwhile, promoter Bob Arum has joined the list of people who believe the "Pacman" is going to be stronger as a lightweight than as a super featherweight.

Arum cited as an example Miguel Cotto, who became a more effective fighter after bulking up to 147 and joining the welterweight ranks.

Arum, chief of Top Rank which is putting together the Lethal Combination card, said Pacquiao has been struggling to make the 130 lbs in his past two fights.

And the weight struggles, Arum believes, may have been the reason why both fights—although victories—failed to produce a knockout.

"He deprives himself" trying to make the weight, Arum said.

Arum, though, believes Diaz stands a chance as long as he sticks to his game plan. Diaz is a 6-1 underdog in the fight.

Rampant Air21 eyes 'Magic 11' vs Magnolia

AIR21 HAS NEVER HAD IT THIS GOOD. And for the Express, things can only get better.

With the Express leading a tournament for the first time in memory, Air21 shoots for the first outright semifinal berth in franchise history when it locks horns with Magnolia in the eliminations of the Smart Pilot Finals Cup at the Araneta Coliseum tonight.

The 10-6 Express can assure themselves of at least a playoff for the second successive Final Four slot with a win in their 7:30 p.m. game. And, as things stand, 11 wins could be the magic number for everyone.

Red Bull steps in cocky closer toward the semifinal outlet when the Barakos clash rebuilt-retooled Welcoat in the 4:30 p.m. curtain-raiser.

Air21 has never led a tournament at this stage and, thanks to a handwerking import in Steven Thomas and a host of locals pitching in role to the hilt, the Express can achieve a first for a franchise that was not given much of a chance to perform this well in the start.

"This is the most unbelievable good," coach Bo Perasol said last week after a 91-87 victory over Welcoat. "Winning 10 games was what we set out to do. Now we have to work harder to finish in the top two."

Thomas has been the biggest reason why the Express have been this good this deep in the tournament.

Against the Orange, Thomas hit all the shots that mattered in the crunch, aside from doing a lot of the intangibles that kept the Express within striking distance for the endgame.

STANDINGS	W	L
Air21	10	6
Red Bull	9	7
Coca-Cola	8	7
Magnolia	8	7
Welcoat	8	7
Alaska	7	8
Talk 'N Text	6	8
Sta. Lucia	5	8
Shoemax	5	8
Purefoods	4	8
Welcoat	4	11

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:30 p.m.— Red Bull vs Welcoat
7:30 p.m.—Air21 vs Magnolia

Magnolia is still in the running for a top-two slot, but a loss tonight could prove damaging, especially if the Barakos spread the Dragons.

At 9-6, Red Bull is half a game ahead of Magnolia and two solo teams and the Barakos would be hoping for nothing but an 8th-20 victory to give their buffer to second place.

Manny B. Castillo

Air21's Gary David (top), one of the Express' backcourt locals, is expected to step up again in support of import Steven Thomas.

Manny leads convoy to Las Vegas

From page A27

to Santa Monica for the press luncheon.

Roach said the workout would be the Filipino's last heavy practice for the bout.

"We are cutting back on the workout [in Las Vegas]," said Roach, who predicted a knockout win for his prized ward.

"He (Diaz) is a tough guy but it will take more than toughness to beat Manny Pacquiao."

The entourage was particular about following a certain routine every bout, Pacquiao should be very pleased with the fight's latest developments.

The Nevada State Athletic Commission approved Jay Onaldo-Ide as the chief scale in the ring on fight night. Onaldo-Ide was the referee of Pacquiao's third bout against Mexican legend Erik Morales and Jorge Solis. Almost unanimously, both fights ended up in knockout victories.

Appointed as judges in the HBO pay-per-view bout were CJ Ross, Gary Morris and Raul Solis.

Preppies packed up after checking into his race room suite as final was finally waved. The boxer, his family and supporters feasted on calderos and stewed beef, chicken adobo, grilled milkfish and pancit bihon for dinner.

Preppies mingled with visitors and well-wishers during dinner, engaged them in talks about almost everything, including the latest NBA title by the Miami Heat, before finally calling it a day.

SPORTSWATCH

Palaro, Senate scribes gain

PANCHO MALAGARANG PRESS CORPS and Senate beauties disported their respective rivals over the weekend to advance to the Final Four of the Media Sports League Chairman Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. Cup at the Central College of the Philippines gym.

The Palaro Boys teamed up their deep bench to oust PSA Sports, 1-13-81, while Pryan Bautista carried Senate to dominating Baranggay, 86-80, in the crossover semifinals matches held Saturday.

The last-hearse win now await their respective foes in the Final Four of the country's biggest inter-media tournament supported by Pagcor. The other quarterfinal matches were rescheduled due to Typhoon "Frank."

Pacay 'Big Event' Friday

TOP CONGRESS FROM BIG CONGRESS groups dispute the championship to the Pacay Big Event 4-Cock Derby this Friday at the Pacay City Coliseum.

Derby hosts Jet and Joel Fernando said 40 entries from Northern Cockers Association, Southerner Cockers Association of the Philippines, Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines, the Pacay Cockers, as well as participants from Pampanga, Bataan, Batangas, Laguna, Cebu, Davao and Iloilo are competing.

80 fights at SJC today

MORE THAN 80 KICKBOXING SCHEDULED in the JSC 4-Cock Derby today at the San Jose Coliseum.

The derby follows the 240-entry "Bibi Fernandez" 6-cocker that ended last Monday and produced four co-champions J and B Juju Llop (Bacolod), Pacay Arena July 14, 16 and 18 (Bitchoy Chino and Boy-Boy Bautista), Diego Silang Farms (Rene Dagatan and Bobbit Cruz-YLA Welfare Fund.

Host Jaime Alcantara of the Luzon Semicocok Breeders Association (LSBA) has dangled a guaranteed prize of P600,000.

BY TOP CHOICE
Races at SJuP

I'm ripe for world crown, says battling Banal

FIFTY-EIGHT! Success Banal

By Cedelf P Topas

ONLY 19 YEARS OLD, FILIPINO AJ "BIGcookie" Banal believes he is ripe for a world title.

Banal seeks a place in Philippine boxing lore when he clashes with Ruhiel Concepcion of Panama for the vacant World Boxing Association super flyweight title on July 28 at the Cebu City Coliseum.

"I'm very prepared," Banal, member of Cebu's famed ALA Stable, said during the PSA forum at the Shakey's UN Avenue branch yesterday. "I don't want this opportunity to slip away especially because I will be fighting in my hometown."

Banal (No. 3 by the WBA, Nanal, who has already logged a total of 120 rounds of sparring for the fight, could become the country's 18th world titleholder after WBC superbantamweight king Manny Pacquiao, WBO bantam titlist Gerry Peñalosa, IBF flyweight champion Dionito Donaire and Donnie Nietes, owner of the WBO ninefly-weight title.

A Banal victory could also pave the way for his showdown with WBA No. 1 mend Ricketo Hadeleo of Japan in September, assuming Hadeleo will not be stripped for inactivity.

Banal (No. 3 by the WBA, Nanal, who has already logged a total of 120 rounds of sparring for the fight, could become the country's 18th world titleholder,

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT HIM, JOIN HIM. And that's exactly what Dominik Hrbaty (left) does, crossing from and taking a seat beside Roger Federer just before losing to the World No. 1 in the first round of Wimbledon action.

WIMBLEDON

Top seeds march on

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—At 26, new Grand Slam champion and No. 1, Ana Ivanovic has a new perspective on the game as she seeks to win Wimbledon for the first time.

The 20-year-old Serb lived up to her billing on opening day at the All England Club, beating Romina de Los Rios of Paraguay, 6-3, 6-2, in less than an hour on Center Court on a sun-splashed Monday that also featured victories by Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Serena Williams.

The top-seeded Ivanovic doesn't feel burdened by carrying high expectations as a title favorite.

"It's very challenging for me," she said. "That's something new and very exciting. I'm very happy to be taking every challenge I get. I think I'm still basically the same person. The only thing I feel changed a little bit, I have a little bit more confidence."

Serena Williams, a two-time Wimbledon champ, won her first-round match beating Kaia Kanepi of Estonia, 7-5, 6-3.

Roger Federer began his bid for a ninth successive Wimbledon season by beating Dominik Hrbaty 6-3, 6-2, 6-2, for his 40th straight grass-court win and 55th consecutive victory on the All England Club.

In the enduring image of day one, Hrbaty—realizing it could be his last time on Center Court—sat in a chair alongside Federer during the final changeover at 5-2 to the third set. The two old friends and former doubles and practice partners chatted and laughed.

"I looked over and there he was," Federer said. "He asked if he could sit next to me, I said, 'Sure. No problem. There's an extra one.'"

No. 3-seeded Djokovic—the Australian Open champion who could face Federer in the semifinals—overcame a poor second set and beat Michael Berrer of Germany, 7-5, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4. AP

Euro '08: Germany eyes final vs Turkey

TENERO, SWITZERLAND—Turkey has rolled on some very dominant qualifiers to get into the semifinals of the European Championship, and now it will have the chance to test them against the three-time champions when the two teams meet for a spot in the final.

Turkey coach Fatih Terim will need some ingenuity just to put a healthy team on the field because his squad is decimated by injuries and suspensions. Up to nine regular starters could be out, depending on some late fitness checks.

In such circumstances, the hopes for an upset look very slim. Germany coach Joachim Loew has a full-strength squad to choose from for Wednesday's match in front after midfielder Torsten Frings answered midweek questions from a broken rib. But Loew has coached in Turkey and has nurtured his players about the nuances in Turkey's game.

After surging there assuming comebacks to reach the semifinals, even an injury-ravaged Turkey will be confident heading into the game, Loew said Monday.

"All teams in the semifinals have a certain class. I know Turkish players and the conditions there from my own experience," Loew said. "They become emphatic, especially if things are going their way. They have national pride, very high morale and they play until the end." AP

MIKE Krzyzewski (left), head coach of Team USA, joins Carmelo Anthony and Dwyane Wade (right) during the unveiling of the Olympic squad.

USA roster named

CHICAGO—NBA MVP Kobe Bryant and LeBron James were selected as part of the US men's basketball team for the Beijing Olympics on Monday, leading a new-look roster in an attempt to recapture the title.

After winning three straight titles beginning in 1992—when NBA players began competing in the Olympics, the United States finished third at the Athens Games four years ago.

Dwyane Wade, Carmelo Anthony and Jason Kidd were among the 12 players selected. Completing the team were Stephen Jeffers, Carlos Boozer, Chris Bosh, Dwight Howard, Chris Paul, Michael Redd and Jason Williams.

"It was a very difficult selection process," USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo said. "After a three-week conference. "When you have so many outstanding players as we have in the country—to select a group of 12 is obviously going to leave out a number of outstanding people."

The team now shares with the world. It will have a mini-camp this week in Las Vegas and tomorrow then July 29-31 in train. The Australian open Olympic play against Greece on Aug. 10. AP

MIKE Krzyzewski (left), head coach of Team USA, joins Carmelo Anthony and Dwyane Wade (right) during the unveiling of the Olympic squad.

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RP INT'L OPEN

Vintage Bong on target

INTERNATIONAL HALL OF FAMER AND PBC HONORARY GENERAL BONG Coo drilled and her old deadly form to claim the Senior Masters title in the 37th Philippine International Open tenpin bowling championships Monday at the SM Bowling Center Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

Carrying the colors of MBA-Pitmo-Timepex, Coo shot 1150 to 10 games, including her eight handicap, to whip 14-handicapper, Zoe London (1120) and Mila Robles (1076) for the title.

London led from the start of the final round until Coo, using an Hyester Complete 999 ball, notched a fiery run of 205, 246, 208, 205 and 202 in the last five games to cop a 207 winning average and seal her second ladies senior plum after her victory in the TBAM Open last March.

"I am grateful to the Lord for giving me the strength to win again at this stage of my life," said Coo, whose nine Open Masters victories are the most by any bowler. "This is very special because it's my first senior crown in the Philippine International Open."

Pranee Manodpanya of MPIA-Hilong shared the spotlight with Coo by winning the men's Senior Masters title in the tournament organized by PBC and sponsored by Ebonite International, Hispeed Paints, Globe Telecoms, Department of Tourism, SM Bowling Centers-MOA, Pagcor, Serway Philippines, PCSO, Columbia, Track, Hanumey, AsiA, PCBC and Heritage Hotel Manila.

The top 10 bowlers in the Open Masters finals will qualify for the 2008 Asian Bowling Federation Tour Philippine leg set on June 20 also at SM Center MOA.

Ltd Lito of PBC-PCBC and Mother Dimensions of MPIA were the event's and ladies' Rookie Masters crowns, respectively.

Coo tallied 2011 in 10 games to beat PBA-PBPA Paolo Hinanay (2003) and MCBMA Oliver Marcelino (1997) while Pranemana, a protégé of Coo, rallied in the last game to post 1811 and whip erstwhile leader Moises Calma-ngan (1798) of PBA and Brg. Cabangen (1716) of BAGP.

STILL QUACK? Bong Coo wins again.

Carlos rules in California

JOSHUA CARLOS PAMES LIP FOR THE JUnior division in San Diego over month as he notches one-day D'Donnell Junior Championship in Palm Springs, California, Monday.

Carlos, 15, had never broken to negate bowling logos at the post-70 O'Donnell Golf Club for a four-variation title in the 7-9-10 age division crown, part of the SCPGA-Southern California Junior Golf Circuit.

The GT10-bucked Carlos stood 11 shots clear of Joe Collings and Patrick Herling.

Meanwhile, Dottie Ardina, Chino Reda and Louise Marcel released on their first tries in the US Girls Qualifying at the Riverton Golf Club in Georgia, also Monday.

Marcel fired a 74 to finish fourth behind Mariah Stackhouse (69), Jessica Korda (72) and Haley Wilson (73). The top three players advanced to the final tournament proper.

Ardina shot a 77 while Reda had a 78.

Powerhouse Thailand squads sweep Filipino junior shuttlers

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OVERMATCHED.

The Philippines were under a powerful Thailand juggernaut, 3-0, in both boys' and girls' team meets to drop out of the team competition of the 14th Asian Schools Badminton Championships at the Binoy Aquino Stadium.

With world-ranked players in tow, Thailand throttled the host in all 10 matches—all in straight sets and overcasting more than 30 minutes—to forge a duel with defending champion Indonesia in today's semifinals.

Singapore also dashed our stay in 3-0 team of fifteen in their own boys' and girls' duel to salvage semifinal encounter with Malaysia, which also needed to the next round along with Indonesia.

Filipino ace Jerlito Sarsona bowed to Thailand's No. 1-ranked junior player and World No. 2006 Pan Pondaidan, 12-21, 10-12, in the first of three singles.

The 14-year-old Sarsona, a Mabanying Pandanan champion, raced in a 4-0 lead in the first set against Rookthaim, 16, before the Thai pulled even at 7 and then took control of the match.

"We have younger players here compared to the Thais because (in Thailand), they have high school students who are already 18 years old," old tournament organizer Joy Estabaya of the Philippine Sports Commission. "Our players gave it their all."

The Philippines will resume its campaign in the individual competitions starting tomorrow.

"We had deep mouth pizza and he said my setting," said Sarsona, a sophomore in Colegio Monterey de Hijo in Laguna, after opponent Laxinidar set by the 5-foot-7 Rookthaim, who stood two inches taller.

Earlier, three-time Palaro champ and 2007 Singapore Youth doubles champion Celine Camille Lee of Bulacan, Bulacan, 21-9, 21-12, in only 22 minutes in the first girls' match.

"I had a hard time adjusting to Glydapol's drop shots and slice," the 5-6, 13-year-old Castillo said in Filipino.

Janice Reiko and Abigail Garcia fell to Arisara Sothitsuksai and Chanwit Chaikhalarn, 21-15, 21-5.

Camille Ting bowed in Pranguach Lerthai, 21-6, 21-9, in the second singles. Una Nicole Bilgera and Rochelle Andrea dropped the second doubles to Sulinee Sawatt and Benniata Thanpanichwong, 21-9, 21-15, and Jeandan Inarpanee yielded to Natsaya Sankhumsa, 21-14, 21-2.

Peter Gabriel Magtayo lost the singles to Supphiphong Phuangpuaphet, 21-17, 21-15, before Ging Pin and Lance Brandel bowed to Bodin Isara and Pollawat Boonpan, 21-14, 21-16.

Philippe Francisco Magtayo and Peter Gabriel Magtayo bowed to Jumpath Jitsiang and Nivinda Wangpraon in the second doubles, 21-18, 21-15, John Gideon Nye lost to Benavit Supaal, 21-13, 21-17, in the third boys' singles.

BUSINESS
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KOREAN AIR

BSP unloads dollars to stem peso slide

Local currency hits intra-day low of 44.73 to $1

By Doris C. Dumlao

SUBSIDING OIL PRICES YESterday dragged down the peso to a new eight-month low of 44.73 but central bank intervention propped up the local currency to a stronger finish at 44.55 to a dollar.

Currency traders said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas unloaded dollars to temper the peso's depreciation as offshore investors sold down assets from Asia due to jitters over surging oil prices and an upcoming US Federal Reserve meeting.

With support from the central bank, the peso managed to post small gains from Monday's closing rate of 44.60 to the greenback, insiders said.

Oil prices rallied above $137 a barrel as prospects of additional supply from Saudi Arabia were negated by supply disruptions in Nigeria and escalating tensions between Israel and Iran. Although ex-

BSP UNLOADS $1...

IN THIS ISSUE

- **S&P sees no change** in RP credit rating /B3
- **Gov't paid P331.5B** in debts in Jan-May /B7

World Bank urges RP to tap $1.2-B fund

By Michelle V. Remo

THE WORLD BANK HAS ENCOURAGED the Philippines to draw from the $1.2 billion in global financial assistance it offered for countries battling with the food crisis.

In a meeting last week, World Bank country director Ben Hofman told reporters that bank representatives briefed Philippine economic officials about the loan facility made available to help address the problem of tightening supply and rising prices of food in many parts of the world.

"The facility is intended to address the food crisis worldwide by helping countries implement programs that will help increase [farm] productivity," Hofman said.

A country availing itself of the loan is expected to complement programs and projects that will improve agricultural output, such as those related to irrigation and farm infrastructure. Programs that will aid in the faster delivery of food products from farms to market are also encouraged.

Hofman said that for countries awaiting documents of this particular loan, the World Bank has agreed to eliminate a few of the regular processes for approving financial assistance for speedy implementation of projects and programs addressing the crisis.

The Philippines is very much eligible to apply for the loan, Hofman said, because

WORLD B4

Currencies

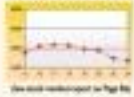
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

44.55 = $1

as of 5 p.m. June 11, 2008

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



Click stock market report on Page B2

Stocks close 1% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1 PERCENT lower yesterday on continued domestic inflation fears, dealers said.

The composite index lost 26.51 points to 2,674.87, after trading between 2,673.87 and 2,685.37.

The all-shares index shed 15.86 points to 1,888.81.

Decliners swamped advancers 77 to 38, with 30 other issues ending unchanged.

Turnover fell to P1.74 billion from P1.84 billion on Monday.

Investors are waiting for the meeting this week of the US monetary authority, an analyst told Dow Jones Newswires.

The analyst said further declines were possible if the Fed decided it was at the end of its easing cycle.

"There's a concern over what the Fed will say—and if there will be a change in policy rate. It will be bad news for us," Jose Victor of ATR CapitalGrand.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell P58 to P3,375 while Metropolitan Bank lost P2 to P50.

San Miguel Corp. shares dropped to P49.50 with "A" shares losing 30 centavos and "B" shares giving up a peso. AKP

Audi TDI 2006, 2007, 2008 24 HOURS LE MANS Winner

AUDI R10 TDI WINS 3 YEARS IN A ROW IN THE 24 HOURS OF LE MANS

Ingolstadt/Le Mans—The Audi R10 TDI remains unbeaten in the Le Mans 24 Hour race: in its third attempt, the diesel sports car won the French endurance classic yet again. After the incredible thrill of the 76th edition of the race, Tinke Capelle (Indy), Tom Kristensen (Denmark) and Allan McNish (Scotland) triumphed at the wheel of the Audi R10 TDI another 2.

The widely anticipated duel between Audi and Peugeot definitely kept its promise: in front of a record crowd of 250,000 spectators, the two car manufacturers entered into a thrilling battle with their diesel sports cars which Audi finally won by a margin of 4m 31s.

During the entire race distance, the winning Audi R10 TDI and the new Peugeot 908 was never separated by more than a lap. After Peugeot initially set the pace, both the reliability and efficiency of the Audi R10 TDI gained the upper hand at night. After race set in at Le Mans, Dindo Capelle, Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish took the lead at 03.17 and held it until the finish at 15:00 hours.

On a rain-soaked track, the Audi drivers fully profited from the superiority of Audi TDI Power and led the field by a margin of one lap. In addition, they took advantage of the fact that Audi Sport Team Joest had entered the race with a set-up that was the best compromise for both dry and wet track surfaces. While the opposition had to change their cars during the race to a rain set-up, Audi only needed to change tires.

Changing tires, however, was an exercise that was practiced frequently in the conditions changed throughout the second half of the race owing to the weather. Blacks, intermediates, and rain tires—it was crucial to take the most suitable tires at the correct time.

Audi Sport Team Joest and the Audi drivers fully exploited their experience and operated faultlessly. The only frightening moment occurred in the dramatic final phase when there was a collision between the leading car and a back marker involving the reinstated Tom Kristensen. In that situation, the sheer strength of the Audi R10 TDI became visible as well. The car ran faultlessly without the slightest technical lapse during the 24 hours.

Scotsman Allan McNish scored his second Le Mans victory after his inaugural 1998 triumph – 2008 being his first win with Audi. Tom Kristensen, born Denmark, extended his existing record to eight Le Mans victories now. Italian Dindo Capelle was for the third time after 2003 and 2004.

For Audi Sport Team Joest, it was the third successive victory with the Audi R10 TDI. Thus, a hat-trick has been achieved for the second time after 2000, 2001 and 2002. three Le Mans victories achieved by one team. The Le Mans winners' trophy that normally needs to be returned 12 months after each single victory is therefore in the possession of AUDI AG for good.

The other two Audi R10 TDI cars finished fourth and sixth. Youngsters Lucas Luhr, Alexandre Prémat and Mike Rockenfeller were in contention for a podium finish until shortly before the end and had previously occupied third place. In the penultimate hour of the race, however, the oil filter of their V12 TDI engine had to be changed.

Frank Biela, Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner also encountered bad luck: the winning trio of 2006 and 2007 lost all chances for a better result on Sunday morning when a clutch had to be changed owing to a spin and the subsequent restart in second gear. In its tenth attempt, Audi has won the Le Mans 24 Hour race for the eighth time. Since 2000, Audi technology has been victorious at Le Mans. "This was a success of drivers, team and the efficiency of the Audi TDI technology – a triumph of reliability", said Ruper Stadler, Head of the Board of Management of AUDI AG who followed the race at Le Mans personally in the Audi pit garage. "It was the most tense Le Mans race I remember. We had a very strong opponent who had an extremely fast car. But once more, it became obvious that Le Mans particularly rewards reliability and efficiency. I am proud of this team. And every Audi employee and customer can be proud, too."

PGA Cars

PGA Cars is the Sole Importer and Distributor of Porsche and Audi in the Philippines. It is part of the Cardenio Group of Companies, which is involved in insurance, real estate, stock brokerage, car marquees, oil exploration and travel and tours. PGA Cars was awarded the Porsche franchise in 1996, and became a the cornerstone of PGA Cars's drive to be the premier Importer and Distributor of premium and high-technology vehicles in the country.

Coming soon: Audi Westgate Alabang Showroom

PGA Cars has chosen the Westgate Center in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang as its home of its second facility after its main headquarters at EDSA, Greenhills. This new dealership will be built using the latest Audi Terminal building concept and will feature an 8-car showroom, customer lounges with business center and ample parking space. After Sales quick service side will be offered by the setting up of two work bays in the dealership-counting quality and convenient customer service to Audi owners living within the Alabang area. Audi Westgate is scheduled to open in the fourth quarter of this year.

Audi R10 TDI

Vehicle type – Le Mans Prototype (LMP1)

Chassis – Carbon-fiber composite construction with aluminum honeycomb core, complies with the strict FIA crash and safety standards

Engine – 90° V12 turbo-charged engine, 4 valves per cylinder, DIRECT, 2 titanium exhaust valves, 2 x titanium intake valves, diamond-like carbon (DLC) coated, and maximum boost pressure of 2.04 bar absolute, direct-shift injection, TDI fully-encased aluminum exhaust, 2 four automotive diesel particle filters

Engine management – Bosch MS10

Oil system – Dry sump, Shell Oil

Cubic capacity – 5000 cc

Power – over 650 hp

Torque – over 1100 Nm

Transmission – Rear-wheel drive, six-fast manual

Clutch – Ceramic dutch

Gearbox – Pneumatically actuated sequential 6-speed race gearbox

Differential – Viscous-mechanical locking differential

Drive shafts – Constant velocity steel driveshaft drive shafts

Steering – Electronically-controlled rack and pinion power steering

Suspension – Independent front and rear double wishbone suspension, pushrod system with torsion bar and adjustable dampers

Brakes – Dual-circuit hydraulic braking system, monobloc 6-piston brake calipers, front and rear ventilated carbon fiber brake discs, driver adjustable brake variable brake balance

Wheels – O.Z. magnesium forged wheels, front: 18x 10 inch, rear: 18.5 x 14 inch

Tires – Michelin radial, front: 355/55 R18, rear: 370/71 R18

Length – 4800 mm

Width – 2000 mm

Height – 1000 mm

Minimum weight – LMP1 Le Mans: 900 kg / Audi: 905 kg

Fuel tank capacity – 81 liters (Shell V-Power Diesel)

S&P sees no change in RP credit rating

Agency pegs 2008 GDP growth at 5.5%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT DECISION TO PUSH back the target to balance on budget from this year to 2010 will not affect the Philippines' sovereign credit rating, according to debt-rating firm Standard & Poor's.

"In this year the original target, and we were not expecting a balanced budget, there is no ruling implications," said analyst Agnes Benard in a Asia-Pacific sovereign credit research released yesterday.

The Philippines is currently rated by Standard and Poor's as three notches below investment grade.

It is more bullish than the Moody's rating of four notches below investments grade, but ghoulier than Fitch Rating's score for the Philippines at one notches below grade.

The government said it would no longer push for a balanced budget this year, and instead post a deficit of P95 billion, because it has to spend more this year to counter the effects of skyrocketing food and oil prices.

Despite this, S&P expects the Philippine economy as measured by Gross Domestic Product to grow by 5.5 percent this year due largely to strong domestic demand.

"The key issue remains that revenue collections should meet its goals and so address this long-standing deficiency" Benard said.

S&P said the 17.8-percent rise in revenue collections by the Bureau of Internal Revenue in the first four months of the year was "encouraging" while expenditure growth remained low as it persisted.

"Spending will increase later in 2008 as a new subsidy and a one-off electricity subsidy to four million households kick in," he said.

Benard said the outlook could be revised to "positive"—a prelude to a credit rating upgrade—if revenue collection is improved.

MCCI shuts Mindanao smelters

By Dustin L. Lucas

METALS PROCESSING firm MCCI Corporation will temporarily shut down its two base-nickel smelting plants in Mindanao as part of its program to raise operational efficiency.

In a statement, the company said that its plants in Iligan and Misamis Oriental would cease operations for three months to give way to repairs.

The plant repairs and upgrade will cost $2 million.

MCCI Corp. is a wholly owned subsidiary of mining firm Philippine Mining Metals Corp. (PSMC).

In a notice to employees, PSMC official this president for another operations John Cabarrus said the company would close down both MCCI's Iligan and Misamis Occidental smelter plants.

He said that the firm would also address issues raised by the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"While we are confident that we have addressed any environmental laws or conditions, we shall likewise install additional environmental and safety measures to both plants," Cabarrus said.

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300	465,000	672,750
400	530,000	830,000
500	675,000	987,500
1000	1,300,000	1,975,000

HOSPITALIZATION

Plan	Hospitalization Benefits
100	P500/day
200	P900/day
300	P600/day
400	P800/day
500	P1,000/day
1000	P2,000/day

AMOUNT OF PREMIUMS

Plan	Annual 10-Yr	Annual 15-Yr	Semi-Annual 10-Yr	Semi-Annual 15-Yr
100	866.00	937.00	3,275.00	3,520.00
200	1,530.00	1,806.00	10,560.00	12,560.00
300	1,548.00	1,869.00	15,840.00	18,840.00
400	2,060.00	2,510.00	21,120.00	24,720.00
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RP bullish on growth prospects of coco exports

By Amy R. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES EXPECTS THE VOLume of coconut product exports to bounce back this year to 1.516 million metric tons in copra terms as the local industry recovers from damage caused by typhoons in 2006.

In an interview, Philippine Coconut Authority Deputy Administrator Arturo Liquete said the export target this year was 12.2 percent more than last year's volume of 1.707 million tons.

Contributing to the expected growth is the projected increase in local coconut production due to favorable weather.

PCA expects coconut production this year to expand to 2.366 million tons in copra terms, up 9 percent from last year's 2.167 million tons said an improvement over the initial estimate 2.43 million tons.

Meanwhile, domestic consumption is likewise expected to grow by 4 percent to 850,000 tons, up from last year's 825,000 tons, Liquete said.

For the first half of the year, Liquete said coconut based exports had already hit as much as 929,619 tons.

Of this figure, coconut oil accounted for more than half, with the export volume estimated at 498,419 tons as of June.

The Philippines is currently the world's biggest exporter of coconut oil.

For 2008, the PCA earlier said that it expected the volume of coconut oil exports to increase by 12.8 percent to 1 million tons, from last year's 886,037 tons.

To ensure sustained production, PCA Administrator Oscar Garin earlier said that the agency had several programs underway, including a fertilization project that will run from 2008 to 2012.

"For this year, we need some P1.89 billion for the fertilization of coconut lands to produce that additional 150,000 MT, another P1.95 billion in 2009 for an additional 270,000 MT. P2.39 billion in 2010 and P500 million by 2011," Garin said earlier.

Other programs currently being implemented by the PCA include the intercropping strategy; planting and replanting of some 20,000 hectares with coconut hybrid and local improved varieties; establishing coconut seed gardens in 68 provinces; and diversifying of intercropped areas.

The agency is likewise developing nontraditional coco products such as biodiesel and coir fiber; promoting coco processing technologies and setting up of village level processing centers.

Free rent for Taiwan firms

SBMA out to woo hi-tech companies into free port

By Roland W. Durongs

AMEZA

THE SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN Authority yesterday announced that Taiwanese firms engaged in high technology projects could enjoy free rent if they would locate to the Zam port zone.

SBMA administrator Armand C. Arroso said in a statement that the rent-free incentive being offered, on top of regular perks from SBMA, was agreed upon during the joint economic conference between Taiwan and the Philippines last week.

Arroso said the free rent would also apply at the Clark special economic zone. The agreement would be good for three to five years and would cover firms that must each commit at least $25 million in investments.

He said the move was meant to spur the entry of more high-technology firms in order to bolster the country's technological capability.

Arroso, who joined the Philippine investment mission to Taiwan from June 12 to 16, said that the SBMA had been pushing to attract companies in information and communications technology, software design, biotechnology and related fields.

"This new incentive shows our intention to build our capabilities and be globally competitive," he added.

Data from Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs show that there are now 70 Taiwanese firms in Subic, with total investment commitments of $760 million.

In Clark, eight Taiwanese companies have put up warranty worth a total of $265 million.

According to SBMA, Taiwanese firms are the second biggest investor group in Subic in terms of investment value after Korean firms.

Arroso said that with the free rent being offered to the Taiwanese, the SBMA hoped to realize its long-term "Cyber-Subic" program, focusing on the development of ICT facilities in the free port.

SBMA has already reserved locations for ICT industrial clusters in coordination with the Subic Bay Development and Management Corp., which owns the industrial park where most Taiwanese firms in Subic are based.

Also in last week's economic meeting, SBMA and senior trade officials renewed ties an agreement with their Taiwanese counterparts to grant Taiwanese firms in Subic and nearby Clark reduced tariffs under the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Free Trade Area's common effective preferential tariff scheme.

In turn, Taiwanese exports would be sent to the Philippines to assist in running integrated circuit designers.

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MCCI shuts Mindanao smelters

From page B1

studs pollution control devices such as the construction and improvement of siltation ponds or catch basins, chimney to smoke stack and installation of additional fabric bags or hoods in the crushing plant.

"This is in line with the company's policy not to compromise the health and safety of its employees and stockholders," he added.

PCMC will operate three integrated ferro-nickel smelter plants in the country by the end of the year with the completion of its expansion and rehabilitation programs.

The firm is now in the process of setting up furnaces and kilns in its three plants, namely the Marinduque plant, the MCCI-Sigan ferro-nickel smelter plant in Lanao del Norte, and the Surigao plant in Cebu, according to PCMC chair Ramon Ang.

The Sigan ferro-nickel smelter facility, the country's first, was formerly a calcium carbide plant owned by Maria Cristina Chemicals Inc. PCMC acquired 95-percent ownership of the plant from its former owner in December 2007.

It has since been converted into a ferro-nickel processing facility that exports nickel to Australia. PCMC expects to complete the rehabilitation of its second furnace by December so it can fully operate as an integrated ferro-nickel plant.

Meanwhile, Mr. Billiton, the world's largest mining company and long-time partner of PCMC, will source part of its nickel requirements from the MCCI-Sigan facility.

The two companies have a two-year supply contract for 300 tons of nickel per month.

BSP unloads dollars to stem peso slide

From page B1

ing oil prices do not weigh down government finances directly because the country has scrapped fuel subsidies a long time ago, higher importation costs were creating a big demand for dollars at the spot foreign exchange market.

Bankers estimated that the country now needed about $3 billion a month to pay for oil imports, which is large as the monthly supply of foreign exchange from overseas Filipinos sending money to local households.

Raissat Lim, treasurer at Philippine National Bank, said offshore portfolio investments in local stocks, bonds and other bank products were flowing out of the country, thus exerting pressure on the local currency.

"If you look at portfolio as a share of total foreign exchange inflows, it's small, but if you look across, out of these years, it moves last us as a percentage (of inflows) in one month, the impact is big," Lim said.

Lim said the local currency would likely trade in the 44-45 range against the dollar through the year and that 45-$1 would offer a strong barrier against a further peso freefall.

The government, for the purpose of fiscal and economic planning, has assumed a peso-dollar exchange rate of ₱42.45 against the dollar this year.

"The peso has been under pressure due to a string of bad news on growth, inflation, and related fiscal targets," global credit watchdog Standard & Poor's said in a report yesterday.

The local currency hit an eight-year peak of ₱40.25 against the greenback in late February but has lost steam since then. But S&P noted that the local central bank's foreign exchange reserves had reached $70.6 billion at the end of May despite its selling dollars to support the peso.

On top of the official foreign exchange reserves, the central bank has about $9 billion worth of "unofficial" foreign exchange locked up in currency swaps, a swapping up instrument heavily used last year when portfolio inflows poured into the country and fueled a 19-percent peso appreciation against the dollar.

But Asia's best performing currency last year is now one of the region's weakest, having fallen by 7.5 percent since the start of 2008.

World Bank urges RP to tap $1.2-B fund

From page B1

the country was still far from its borrowings limit with the World Bank. Under the bank's ongoing Country Assistance Program, the Philippines may borrow as much as $900 million a year. For this fiscal year, however, the Philippines has so far borrowed only $250 million.

The Philippines has had its share of the food crisis, manifested by the soaring prices of food products, especially rice, in the commercial market. In May, prices of rice alone rose more than 30 percent from a year ago, according to the latest inflation report by the National Statistics Office.

Overall consumer prices, about half of which are accounted for by food costs, rose 9.8 percent year-on-year in May, the fastest pace in nine years.

Although still considered an agricultural economy, the Philippines is the world's biggest importer of rice, making it vulnerable to supply woes in the world market.

And weather experienced by some key producing countries and the continually growing global demand have led to soaring prices of rice. The failure of many Filipino households to afford commercial rice have forced members to queue for the subsidized rice being sold by the National Food Authority.

Because the NFA here rice at a high cost and sells it at subsidized prices, the state-owned firm is estimated to post P95.8 billion in losses this year alone.

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With expansion on the table, PhilNaRe stake now up for grabs

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

NATIONAL REINSURANCE CORP OF the Philippines (PhilNaRe) has hired investment banking group Philippine Investment Partners to scout for investors interested to acquire up to 30-percent stake in the country's sole reinsurer.

Rhoven Garcia, PhilNaRe chair and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), said the move of a strategic investor within the year would help expand PhilNaRe's reinsurance business.

Garcia said Philippine Investment Partners will serve as a consultant for PhilNaRe.

PhilNaRe early this month said it was in talks with Singaporean reinsurer ACR Capital Holdings Pte. Ltd. for a long-term partnership that would allow PhilNaRe's reinsurance business to expand throughout Asia.

Garcia said that, aside from ACR Capital, there were other investors interested in acquiring a stake in PhilNaRe, but he declined to identify them.

"Our attraction is, we are the only reinsurance company in the country and we have a very big reinsurance market, which is [worth] around P18 billion a year," he said. "We need a strategic investor who will give us the credibility [to expand internationally] and share their experience and their business with us."

The company, which provides life and nonlife insurance to Philippine insurers and neighboring markets, hopes to sell its stake at a price higher than its book value of P72.88 a share, Garcia said.

PhilNaRe closed at P72 a share.

Gov't tells BOI to go easy on granting perks

Not all property developers deserve incentives, says DOF

By Michelle V. Rosco

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE (DOF) has urged the Board of Investments (BOI) to go easy on the grant of tax holidays to residential property developers, saying that in being "too generous," the agency has been unnecessarily depriving the government of much-needed revenues.

A finance official explained that not all residential property developers were entitled to tax holidays.

The DOF already has submitted several position papers to the Board of Investments, the agency that approves applications for fiscal incentives by companies belonging to the government's priority industries.

The DOF also suggested for the BOI to be guided by the Housing Act in approving applications for income tax holidays.

"The law states that developers engaged in socialized housing projects are the only ones entitled to income tax exemptions. A residential property falls under the 'socialized housing' category if it sells under development costs P300,000 or less.

"What is happening now is that even developers of condominiums costing P3 million per unit are being given income tax holidays," the DOF official said. "Ideally, tax incentives should benefit only those that develop socialized housing for the poor."

The official has requested anonymity because he is not an official DOF spokesperson.

According to the official, the DOF submits a position paper to the BOI every time a property developer applies for tax incentives, but to no avail.

The DOF insisted in its position papers that the government's revenue-generating efforts would be adversely affected by the grant of income tax exemptions to upscale developers.

The government will not be able to appropriately increase tax collection from the property development sector even if industry members have been recording increasing profits, the DOF said.

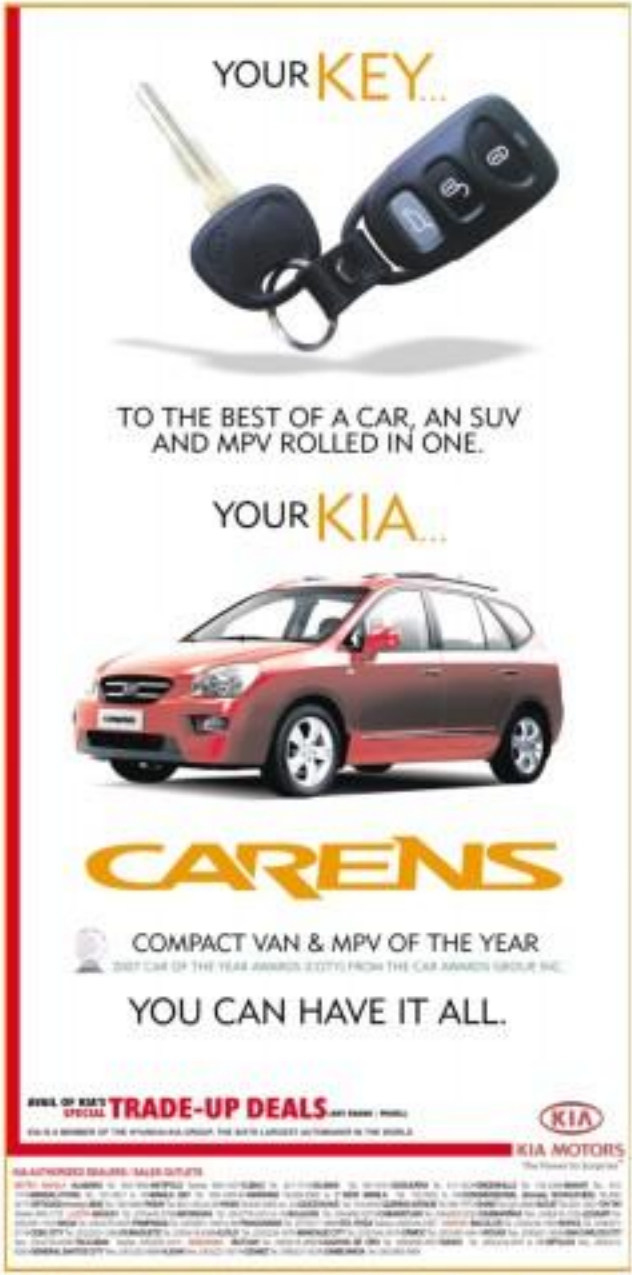
The BOI, on the other hand, had said that it was guided by the Investment Priorities Plan (IPP) in approving developers' applications for tax perks.

This year's IPP—a list of priority sectors that the government has said it will support through the grant of fiscal incentives like income tax holidays...includes the housing sector, the BOI said.

The grant of fiscal incentives is one to attract foreign investors into the country, the BOI said.

It was reported earlier that the BOI had granted tax holidays to six residential projects, including that of SM Development Corp. of mall magnate Henry Sy and Iloilo Properties Philippines Inc. of tycoon Lucio Tan.

The SM project is the P867-million Mezza Residences on Kalayaan Avenue in Quezon City. Tan got tax perks for its P563-million One Archers Place in Manila, and the Gen Emeralds Lot in Ortigas, Pasig City.



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ISM raising ₱655M for IT investment plans

By Rica T. Obinendo

PUBLICLY LISTED ISM COMMUNICATIONS Corp., which controls Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (Etpi), is selling ₱655 million worth of shares to raise funds for its IT investment plans.

ISM said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) that its board of directors has approved a stock rights offer, under which all shareholders can buy one new share at 2.6 centavos for every five shares held. ISM said that 2.6 centavos was the median price of its shares at the PSE for the last 10 trading days.

"Advance Funds and Philweb Corp. committed to subscribe to their maximum entitlements under the rights offer. At present, Advance Funds owns approximately 33.2 percent of the corporation (ISM) while Philweb owns 17.6 percent. Advance Funds and Philweb also committed to take up any unsubscribed shares of the rights offer," ISM said.

The company estimated that the rights offer would raise about ₱655 million that it could use "to take advantage of certain IT-related business opportunities it is presently negotiating."

The company will issue the shares in May that it was scrambling to raise one or two IT companies to bolster its position in the convergence and technology market.

"We have ₱3 billion in cash, so we have a war chest, and we are looking at one or two things that may or may not pan out but we assure you that we are on the path to growth," said former trade minister Roberto Ongpin, chair of ISM.

ISM is also seeking to raise capital to be able to buy more shares of Etpi and to upgrade the telco's existing facilities.

Since 2006, ISM has bought 77.7 percent of Etpi. The rest is being bought over by the government and private parties.

PNB-Allied profit seen at ₱3.5B

By Dave C. Dantes

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK, whose merger with Allied Banking Corp. was approved by their respective shareholders yesterday, was estimated net profit hitting ₱3.5 billion this year, about 5 percent higher than the combined net earnings last year.

In a briefing after PNB's stockholders meeting, PNB president Oscar Mir said the integration of the two banks earned by Ashawa and Jose Antonio Lucio Tan would result in about ₱1.2 billion in one-time expenses over the next 12 months.

"Normally what happens in a merger is there will be integration costs. The full benefits of the integration will be seen in the second-to-third year," he said.

Next year, combined net profits were "conservatively" estimated to reach about ₱4 billion.

PNB, which came out of a government-ordered rehabilitation ahead of schedule, posted ₱1.5 billion in audited net profit in 2007. Allied bank's net earnings were higher at ₱1.2G billion.

Of the combined net profit goal, PNB was likely to contribute ₱3 bil. from this year and ₱2.4-₱2.5 billion next year, Mir said.

"If you follow (where) we've been growing by 20 percent each year," he said.

"It's not credit driven growth. There are non-repetitive costs. After it's done, we'll get the full benefits," he said.

The two banks' stockholders approved the merger through an exchange of shares, supplied by the third quarter of this year, in separate meetings yesterday. The next step is to get approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Sultan Mining defers IPO plan

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lanzon

COAL MINE OWNER SULTAN MINING & Energy Development Corp. has deferred its P480-million initial public offering as it has yet to complete its first half financial report.

In a statement to the stock exchange, lead underwriter Asian Alliance Investment Corp., in consultation with Sultan, has decided to postpone the IPO to the latter part of July. The company was supposed to hold the offering on June 26 to July 3.

In a separate statement, Sultan Mining said it remained committed to proceeding with its IPO as it pointed out that coal stocks, particularly coal, had been insulated from the weakness of the global market. Coal prices have been rising on the back of record high oil prices.

The stock market has a total of 163.7 points since Monday due to lingering fears over a global economic slowdown.

"In spite growing demand and take advantage of surging prices, Sultan Mining said it was ramping up production in its mines in Bislig, Surigao del Sur.

In Bislig coal mine to turn in full commercial production, as more heavy equipments were brought in to develop several open pits.

The company's output in April hit 22,000 metric tons, 320 percent higher than month-ago level. It is expecting production to hit 25,000 MT in May.

Gov't paid ₱331.5B in debts in Jan-May

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE GOVERNMENT spent P331.59 billion in the first five months of the year to service outstanding debt.

This was 1.1 percent higher than the P327.93 billion paid in the same period in 2005, Department of Finance data showed.

The amount paid was 33 percent of the P626.1 billion to debts that the government hoped to settle this year.

DOF figures showed that of the debts settled in the first five months, P110 billion were in the form of interests, while P198.33 billion were principal obligations.

Interests are usually paid on long-term government bonds, as well as notes and proceeds from the sale of state-owned assets, while principal debts are paid with new borrowings.

In terms of source, the debts paid were composed of P232.74 billion in local borrowings and P98.59 billion obtained from foreign creditors. The government has been borrowing largely from domestic sources to minimize the country's exposure to exchange rate volatility.

Finance officials have adopted the policy of religiously servicing all maturing obligations to help woo the government's debt stock, which stood at P3.08 trillion as of March.

But to cut the debt stock, the amount of debts paid every year should be more than the amount of new borrowings incurred in the same period. Last year, when the ratio straightened to 41 to 61 level, the government prepaid some of its outstanding liabilities to help accelerate the reduction of the debt stock. Prepayment is ideal when the price is strong because it makes foreign currency-denominated debts cheaper.

National Treasurer Roberto Tan earlier said, however, the government had suspended prepayment of debts this year as the peso weakened thanks to the 44 to 46 dollar level. "But all debts falling due will be serviced on time," he said.

Another way to cut the debt stock is to make more internally generated funds are enough to meet the government's spending requirements.

The government had aimed to post a balanced budget this year but this was not likely to materialize due to the huge spending requirement this year.

The DOF said the problems confronting the economy this year, especially soaring fuel and food prices, forced the government to spend more on social services and subsidies in the past. It has set a budget deficit ceiling of P75 billion this year.

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ProV banks on Filipino specialists for expansion

By Dustin L. Lucas

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY firm ProV International will hire more Filipino engineers in the coming months as part of its plan to expand its operations in the Middle East and overseas, company officials said.

In an interview, ProV CEO Ajit Brar said the firm was eager to boost the number of Filipino IT professionals in the group because of its "positive experience" with them.

"Filipino human resources are as par with (that of) India," he said. "The people are highly qualified, they are strong in communications and they have strong cultural sensitivity."

Prov International, which provides itself as a premier IT services provider, was founded in 2003. The company has experienced strong growth by working with industry leaders to resolve business issues through comprehensive IT sourcing, services and customer-driven solutions.

The company operates directly with the likes of IBM and Accenture to provide business solutions to clients around the world.

Brar said the Dubai based count had risen by 500 percent since the last few months, many of the new hires being Filipinos.

ProV chief information officer and Philippine country manager John Killian said the company would make to Philippines operations its "primary center" despite its global focus.

"We see 100 percent growth in the Philippines over the next few months," he said.

He said the country could compete with India on many aspects, especially if the local IT industry receives the support that the government is promising.

He said ProV's business model was centering on the fact that many companies were looking at IT solutions from countries other than India.

Waging war against soaring prices

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honorato C. General

THE ONLY THING YOU CAN buy more cheaply today than 10 years or so ago is fire insurance. This phenomenon can show how the government should wage war against soaring food prices.

For decades, fire insurance premiums were controlled by a rating cartel. Every company had to follow the cartelized pricing under pain of severe sanctions. The cartel even had a license under the Insurance Code.

In 1994, in line with the newly Free Trade Agreements, Commissioner Mathay Mathay withdrew the license and broke up the cartel. By a stroke of a pen, fire insurance was sold to an open and free market.

The competition that followed has remained intense. Premiums plummeted to less than one-fifth of what they used to be. And prices are still plunging.

Since the insurance is so cheap, more and more people are buying more and more policies. As a result, premium volume is up and losses are down industry-wide. Fire insurance business has never been more robust and profitable. Everyone is happy.

And now, off to war against soaring food prices. In Metro Manila, steamed chicken costs P162 per kilo. This price is acceptable, provided up by a 40-percent tariff on imported chicken. By the way, this tariff was slapped by Mar Roxas as secretary of trade, which is why I will not vote for him as president. If the 40-percent tariff is scrapped, and chicken imports will be cut-less, the price of dressed chicken should drop to P130 per kilo.

This drop will dramatically raise the demand for chicken. Poultry farms and feed millers will have to increase their capacities. Chicken is the poor man's meat, pork and beef are out of his price range. At P130 a kilo, the poor man should be able to afford an occasional whole dressed chicken. If he cannot, he can buy the lower-priced wings, feet, innards, necks, livers or stomachs.

As demand for chicken rises, prices for pork and beef will have to go down to meet the competition. In the end, the prices of everything in the public markets – from fish to vegetables – will have to go down.

Lower chicken prices will not cut down tax revenues. Customs has not been collecting the 40-percent tariff anyway. Cheap chicken from Thailand is simply being smuggled into the country via Sulu.

Scrapping the 40-percent import tariff will wipe out chicken smuggling. Customs operatives need not have to chase smuggled chicken legs all around Southern Tagalog.

If chicken raisers were allowed to operate without government intervention, and unrels (notably the banking and remove unrels) are dismantled, prices will tumble.

Above all, Malacañang does not have to give out those P500 subsidies to the poor. Aside from being a scrappy measure, this subsidy makes public beggars of our poor.

Most Malacañang completely strip our poor of the little self-respect they have left in their miserable lives?

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Breaking in the fantasy drive from Stuttgart

Test and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

LET'S FORGET FUEL PRICES for now and say the magic word—"Chotleng!" And off we go to "Fantasy Land."

Snuffing of Kuenigen, Germany, and fresh from the C923 watchtower and an obsidian black metallic Mercedes-Benz C280, the keys of which were handed to this humble Motoring test driver.

When a change of pace this luxury vehicle promised me, this writer thought. After a spate of reviews on sedans and suvs focusing on fuel savings, the C280's V6 engine frustrated me instinctively. "In my world, all is an abject, baby. So step on it."

If the C280's roared was open, the C923 people would have heard this writer reply "Yes, master," in a zombie-like tone.

Can act like a zombie

Speaking of zombies, to stop and go traffic, the C280 can act deceptively like one, albeit this one grumbles menacingly at those mean autolit (and lighter) sedans that cut its path. But in the open road, the C280 comes alive, and means revenge on those who made it inhale their exhaust matter in the bustling city.

Where it gets the chance to show its power, the Mercedes-Benz C280 delivers in around ten a smooth 7-speed transmission. One could barely discern the subtle shifts. And on the equally spacious new Active Clark Zocher Ergonomic (ACZ0r), this driver found out what 231 horses really felt like.

MOTORING B2-3

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2008 European New Car Assessment Program (EURO NCAP) and its Australian counterpart ANCAP awarded the Mitsubishi Strada four stars in the Adult Occupant Protection category. This is a test of the car's ability to survive a crash without passenger compartment intrusion. It also passed the Moose test, which determines how vehicles act when the driver evades a suddenly appearing object.

For more details on test results, visit www.euroncap.com and www.ancap.com.au

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The comprehensive safety system of the Mitsubishi Strada offers all the occupants greatly improved all-around collision protection. Mitsubishi's exclusive RISE body construction incorporates front and rear crumple zones with reinforced beams to absorb collision force and direct it away from the vehicle's interior. The engine and drive components also absorb energy, preventing further damage from reaching the cabin.

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Drifting: more than a driving technique

LALIGAN was the team at drifting

By Charles Bahar

WE SAW IT highlighted in a number of movies and of course, it's almost routine for every World Rally driver to do this maneuver during competition. Even Filipino racing celebrity Gabby dela Merced became its recent fan.

Indeed, drifting has become more than a driving technique that is everywhere like Japan, United States and Australia, it has turned into a serious motorsporting event (although it is not yet recognized as a professional form of motorsport by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, the motorsports governing body).

"It's spreading globally, inspiring enthusiasts from private individuals to movie celebrities and of course, groups like us, the Silvermarkets Media to bring it here in the Philippines," explained Jose Linon of 4-Day Print and Bodykits, who is putting up a drift shop in conjunction his already successful business on West Avenue in Quezon City.

The Silvermarket Media, for readers who are not yet familiar, is a group of young entrepreneurs engaged in the automotive aftermarket para business.

Aside from Linon, the Silvermarket Media is also composed Sammy Linon, the group's acknowledged leader as well as head of Wheel Gallery, head chef/owner of Concepcion Cove wheels and Shoe store, car suspension specialist Kevin Lim of Bilstein and H&R Springs, and Benedict Go, who pioneered Nitron lighting for autos in the Philippines.

Promote drifting

Recently, the group organized a drifting event for several members of the media not only to showcase their current abode but also for them to try drifting on a more controlled environment like the open-driving grounds of the Clark Expo Recreation.

Aside from A-Tuy Pistons and Bodykits and Wheel Gallery, the first-ever Media Drift Clinic was also supported by Glade Sports, Motul, C-Tec Dahui Calzone and Jinrai Felicisco of DMF Drift School whose instructors and resource persons included reigning Drift champion Gio Owen and drift revenue Dante Cruz.

"This is our way of supporting the country's growing interest in the sport," said Linon who added that the event was also an excellent venue to show the performances of Nitron Strut, which he now distributes.

"It's one of the best tires that one could have if he or she is interested in drifting," Linon added.

Proper way

Felicisco explained that the event was the proper way to introduce drifting to the novice participants and learn how to perfectly execute basic drifting maneuvers like the Hand Brake, Kasumi drift and Power Slide," Linon said.

The cars used by the participants were BMW twin turbo-powered Civ-Ferr, Silvias and a Mercedes Benz 190E.

"Drifting should never be practiced on streets as this could be dangerous for inexperienced drivers. What's nice that media participants enjoyed drifting, we also hoped that the event will serve as an eye opener for those who will be covering more and more of this event in the near future," said Felicisco, who popularized the sport in the country and whose Lateral Drift championship series has made drifting a weekend sport.

Linon said, "Drifting is not only fun since it could teach drivers what to do in case the situation worsens it."

Linon added that the event also proved to the participants why this sport is fast becoming popular here in the country.

"Drifting requires discipline, good judgment and a mastery of driving skills and techniques. It could be addicting once you get it," he said.

MASTERING drifting techniques takes some patience and constant coaching from expert instructors

DRIFTING is not dangerous but should be practiced on a safe environment.

PRACTICE makes perfect but having expert instructors watching you by could be much better

The Hyundai Santa Fe, are we there yet?

IT IS EASY TO FALL prey to preconceived notions, biases if you will. Facts due mostly of ears and mouths is not free of arbitrary, dangerous conclusions. Rule always brings horrendous traffic. Manila wages pauses have long, lanky dogs. Traffic rape like-diagnosis.

Ask yourselves, ladies and gentlemen, what comes to mind when you think of the Hyundai brand? Honestly, in our subconscious? Saturday of automotive brands, cars with the dashboard [I won't verbalize that we are completely comfortable with] those other than ice, a little sense of hesitation always creeps in when thinking of this marque.

Chalk up this line of thinking to a less than stellar complement of vehicles that initially introduced Hyundai cars to the local market around a decade ago. To say that the current generation of automobiles from this Korean manufacturer is non radically different would be obvious. Inevitably, everything changes over time. What really has to be told is that change has been kind to the Hyundai brand and

André Palma

MY DRIFT

the second generation Santa Fe is confirmation of the good news.

Strong points

If only cars were solely judged by their engines. The 2.2-liter common-rail turbo diesel unit makes the strongest argument for Santa Fe. Four diesel engines across the entire local market can claim to deliver the same amount of bang for buck value. At around 150 bolting and 300 Nm of twist, pull is more than sufficient from about 2,000 rpm.

This engine allows the almost two-ton mass of the Santa Fe to reach the century speed mark with surprising ease. Beyond that, it takes quite a while for the Santa Fe to taste ninety. Not that the still the needle go on the speedometer isn't. Let's just say this is the kind of SUV that is good for less 20 minute stints on the proper highways headed for old grand bases nestled in the hills, a whispering turbo making a compelling argument to push just a little bit more.

Styling is another strong point of the Santa Fe. Proper dimensions and proportions are the solid foundation that allows the details of this SUV's chest metal to come through. A detailed from fascia, highlighted by a gaping front intake limits as an aerospace influence. Smooth treatment of the bonchamps allows people to notice slightly restrained fender treatments. The slanted side of the front windscreen meets a roofline that tapers agreeably, guiding along the rest of the sleek metal, toward the rear of the vehicle. While not drop dead gorgeous, the Santa Fe is quite the looker.

A little more down to earth

The rest of the Santa Fe package is a little more down to earth. Emphasis not on the creps of fanciful. Ergonomics can sometimes be a few millimeters off here and there. The brakes could use a little more modulation. Road holding is

a little on comfort oriented. Rear space visibility could be a little less obstructed. Swivel cues could be mounted straight from the factory. You get the picture. The balance of what makes up the Santa Fe is not quite there yet.

All the axe picking has a point though, for acceptance that has gone to great lengths to close the gap with Japan manufacturers, the Santa Fe is unbelievably close to completing this task.

Where Hyundai used to be a couple of generations back from the competition, this current crop of cars is already nipping at the heels of the rest of the considerably big pawns. It is foreseeable that with continuous improvements by Hyundai will eventually vastly its products that will be difficult to discern from more mainstream products. At this exceptional rate of evolution, the first Santa Fe should be unprovable.

Breaking in the fantasy drive from Stuttgart

From page B/3

The C300's innovative, safety systems and contour-hugging seats impinges also make this writer and her passengers feel what an SUV of P3,000 million is like.

Pitch off, it has a voice command car-controls system, or in so-called COMAND feature. You can verbally "command" what radio station you want to, and who you want to call (via Bluetooth connectivity).

The dashboard monitor is also GPS-enabled. Understands, though, this GPS feature was not yet activated for this unit.

Then, the audio system surround sound features the prestigious Harman/Kardon speakers made exclusively for Mercedes-Benz.

The Keyless-Go function takes keyless entry to a new level. More than just letting you unlock the doors with just a touch of the door handles, you don't even have to insert the key in the ignition. When the key is in the driver's pocket, audio signals will enable the driver to merely step on the brake, press the ignition button on the dashboard, and the car will start. Paradoxically, this same keyless entry and ignition feature is also available in cars such as the Toyota Prius.)

The C300 is overloaded with safety features. Take, for example, the "pre-safe"—the C300's last line of defense after the ABS. When motion and the antilock brake system are not enough during hard stops or sudden braking in extreme conditions, the "pre-safe" system is triggered to

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"LOADED" dashboard

activate its seat belt tensioners and sliding roof. What happens?

The vehicle's occupants are readied for the impending impact or rollover with the seats automatically moving into an upright position, the seatbelts tightening, windows and sunroof automatically closing (with a half-inch opening on all windows).

The adaptive taillight will also flash when the ABS is triggered, warning vehicles following you that an emergency has ensued.

The C300 also has an adaptive brake system, an upgrade of the ASR. It can sense that if the disc brakes are wet, the system will trigger a priming effect. The caliper inside the brake pads will stay closer. The adaptive brake system eliminates the "pulsing" effect of the ABS.

And it significantly increases chances of survival in collisions, the C300 is generously listed with eight airbags.

For golfers, too

Now on to a less essential accounts. The C300 can be a golfer's sedan, too. Take out the folding backrest of the rear seats, and you have a 920-liter luggage space. Enough room for golf bags and other golfing paraphernalia.

Not so on to a less essential accounts. The C300 can be a golfer's sedan, too. Take out the folding backrest of the rear seats, and you have a 920-liter luggage space. Enough room for golf bags and other golfing paraphernalia.

Compared to other C-ES, the exclusive head-of-the-house of Mercedes-Benz, identified as the C300's closest competitor BMW 325 Xisc, the C300 is our "overloaded" entry-level luxury car.

Only loaded, since when this writer started test-driving the unit, the odometer of which read just 36 km, she still had not explored its full features by the time she returned it to the Greenhills base 1,343 km later.

Oh well, at least this writer noticed that the unit was as new that the boats button was fixed in press. And one more thing: the new signal gear and the Speedtronic with speed limiter gear were placed too close to each other. A number of times she used one when she needed the other. Heh, the Germans can't be that perfect, after all.

THE COMPLETE? redesigned 2008 Chrysler Town & Country

Family-friendly mobility and the T&C

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sorilla-Mendoza

PAST SINCE IN 1983, Chrysler created the minivan market with its twins of the Town & Country. Since, acquirers of a minivan and 11 million sales later, Chrysler is consolidating its leadership in the luxury minivan segment with the all-new 2008 T&C.

While competition from Japan and Korea may be ringing up more sales here because of their lower retail prices, the fact remains that, feature for feature, they cannot match the fifth generation T&C that was unveiled at the January 2007 North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

The T&C is produced in three configurations: the basic LX, Touring and Limited.

The Touring variant is available at CAT's Motors, the Philippine distributor of Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep.

First impression

At first glance, the T&C may not impress you with its boxy, dab-sided exterior and stretched-to-present-a-modern-look nose with its Chrysler 300-like grille, quad headlamps and nine wheel flares. But when you climb in and check out its many family-friendly features and thoughtful conveniences, you will understand why in the land where the minivan was invented, the T&C is voted a top choice celebrate.

The all-new seven-seater T&C was designed to transport family and friends comfortably, let's start with the versatile interior. In the Touring edition of the '08 T&C that I test-drove, Chrysler's patented Stow 'n Go seating system, first introduced in 2005, allows you to fold the second row captain's chairs and the child two seats that lets giant tubs under the floor to create a perfectly flat, huge (144 cubic feet) cost cargo area that can accommodate a couch, sheets of plywood, construction grill bags or other large, long and heavy objects.

Storage bins

When the second row and third row seats are upright, the tubs beneath the floor serve as handy storage bins. Even with the third row seats up, a voluminous well behind them offers lots of storage space. Another practical feature not found in other minivan brands is the removable front center console that slides back to the second row of seats. This is convenient any of offering snacks or rear seat passengers.

Moreover, the T&C has 12 cupholders, multiple 12-volt outlets, bag hooks behind the front seats, power sliding doors, power liftgate and power windows that roll up and down in the sliding doors as well as the front doors. The passenger cabin of the '08 T&C looks more upscale than its predecessor with tastefully-selected hues wood and metallic inlays, ambient lighting and LED reading lamps like those in airplanes.

Audio system

However, the audio system disappoints with its single in-dash CD player and no Bluetooth hands-free capability found in high-end Chrysler vehicles. With a P2.280 million price tag, shouldn't the Touring T&C have at least a 6-disc CD changer? And the gear shift lever, sprouting out of the dash as shoulder level instead of from the steering column, seems awkwardly-distanced.

On the other hand, the 2008 model is roomier inside because the overall length and wheelbase have grown by about 2.3 and 3.0 inches, respectively. This adds a 1.6-inch increase to second-row legroom, making the already comfortable captain's chairs the best seats in the government.

Silent

The addition of coil springs at the rear and refined suspension tuning lets and all, thicker glass, deeper carpet padding and an subsequently powerful engine mostly silent at speed cocoonsome in a quiet, comfy, almost floating ride. On a trip to Tagaytay and back one Sunday, my octogenarian guest sitting in one of the captain's chairs repeatedly declared how pleasantly comfortable and safe she felt in the T&C.

Speaking of safety, the T&C is loaded with safety gear not available to other minivans as standard equipment such as six airbags (front and side for front passengers plus curtain-style head protection airbags for all three rows of seats), traction control, electronic stability control, ABS with Brake Assist on all four disc brakes.

6-speed

The 2008 T&C is the first in the minivan category to have a six-speed automatic transmission. Mated to the 'buzzing all-iron's carryover 3.8-liter, 12-valve, 90-polished engine (197 hp, 235 lb-ft max torque), it ensures smooth acceleration and

STOW 'n Go allows back seats to fold flat into the floor.

THE GEARSHIFT lever sprouts out of the dash.

THE 3.8-LITER V6 engine of the 2008 Town & Country Touring variant

improves engine responsiveness. However, because of its size and heft, the T&C is not nimble and does not handle as well as its sportier competitors. Nor can it be as fuel-efficient as CRD (common rail direct injection/turbo diesel) minivans.

Nonetheless, the '08 Touring Town & Country—with its generous in-floor storage space, ultra-flexible Stow 'n Go seating system, array of safety equipment, many practical features, excellent highway manners, quiet and roomy cabin plus superb ride quality—fulfills the reason for its existence: to move family and friends in class-leading comfort, convenience and safety.

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Mark Andreau Cabanlit is a 27 year old consultant for a German software company. He tried Shell Super Unleaded E10 when it first came out and he has been using it ever since.

"I switched because of practicality, it's cheaper and environment-friendly."

- Mark Andreau Cabanlit

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Bryan Puncia, a 31 year old banker, travels out-of-town once in a while on company trips. He always stocks up on Shell Super Unleaded E10 because he knows he saves a lot.

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- Bryan Puncia

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Retiro Mabarilla, Q.C.
Kamias Rd., Q.C.
Katipunan Ave., Q.C.
G. Araneta, Q.C.
E. Rodriguez Ave., Judge Jimenez, Q.C.
Kalayaan Ave., Diliman, Q.C.
Kalayaan Ave., Teachers Village, Q.C.
EDSA, South Triangle, Q.C.
Victory St., Quezon Ave., Q.C.
Tomas Morato, Q.C.

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10th Ave., Kalookan City
Gen. Pascual St., Malabon
Doña Ampara St., North Kalookan
Susana Road, Novaliches
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Felix Ave., Cainta, Rizal
Circumferencial Road, Antipolo City
Ortigas Ext., Cainta, Rizal
Km. 20, Ortigas Ave., Taytay, Rizal
Gen. Luna St., San Mateo, Rizal
JP Rizal, San Roque, Marikina City
A. Tuazon Ave., San Roque, Marikina City
E. Rodriguez Ave., Marikina City
Hunabian, Magsaysay Village, Rizal

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Old National Highway, Muntinlupa City
Ninoy Road, Las Piñas City
Real St., Las Piñas City
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Km21 South Expressway, West Service Rd., Muntinlupa City
National Hi-way, Putatan, Muntinlupa City
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Read us on Saturdays starting July 5

LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan
Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

Battle of the ultimate phones

By Pam Pastor

SINGAPORE—DON'T COMPARE Samsung's Omnia with the Apple iPhone. It wouldn't be fair, says Samsung's global marketing vice president Youngkee Lee. "The Omnia is much better. Our product is superior in all the features and functions."

The Samsung Omnia (SGH-i900) had a world launch at Commonwealth 2000 last week, at the Samsung booth in Singapore Expo's Hall 5. Already available in Singapore, the Omnia will reach Europe at the end of July and the Philippines in August.

Living up to its name, which means "everything" in Latin and "each" in Arabic, Samsung Omnia promises to fulfill all the one desires in a mobile.

Spectacular device

"This is a historical moment for us," Lee said.

Josh Delgado, director of Samsung Australia's Telecom Division, demonstrated the features of what he calls "a spectacular device" at the Omnia press conference.

He showed the Omnia's patented TouchWiz touch-screen capabilities and tap, sweep, drag and drop functions, letting us view a clip from "Kung Fu Panda" and demonstrating the use of the Omnia's 5-megapixel camera.

Watch out, Steve Jobs. Here's a mobile phone out to rival the iPhone

SAMSUNG Omnia

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THE OMNIA promises to do everything you wish for.

SAMSUNG hosts a Commonwealth

Battle of the ultimate phones

From page C1

The Omnia's camera is equipped with smile detection and anti-shake technology and can take auto-panoramic shots. "We don't compromise on features," Delgado said.

Stylish and sleek

Design wasn't compromised either. The Omnia looks stylish and sleek. Its smooth front and backline grooves make sure the phone fits in your palm and gives you a good grip.

Assuming Omnia is a multimedia tornado, allowing you to enjoy your digital entertainment with its wide VGA-sized (WQVGA LCD) screen. Samsung Omnia's 16GB internal memory (8GB users will also be available) and 32GB external memory will allow you to store up to 9,000 songs, 12,800 pictures and 25 DVDs.

Optical mouse

Assuming (and mixed) with Windows to equip the Omnia with a Windows Mobile 6.1 operating system and an optical mouse which means the Omnia can work as your computer away from the office or your home. You can use it to operate Microsoft Outlook e-mail, Microsoft Word, Powerpoint and Excel. You can use it to go online, surf your favourite websites, and post updates and even upload photos to your blog. You can also download additional programs and customise your Omnia like you do your computer.

THE OMNIA works as a GPS device.

ONE phone, countless functions

Samsung Omnia's advanced navigation allows you to use your fingers, the mouse or the stylus to play with your phone's different functions. The Omnia is equipped with three kinds of touch screen technologies—a capacity one, a 3x4 and a 4x4. Thanks to haptic technology, pressing the screen makes you feel like you are touching actual keys—something that's missing from other touch-screen phones in the market.

The battery is detachable and can last up to 400 hours on standby.

The Omnia may be overloaded with features but Samsung's primary priority is still the ease of use. "We want users to use it with one hand. We made the user experience by making a phone call and SMS very easy. We did not forget the basics," said product specialist Youngwon Kim.

Lee agreed. "We matrix how good it looks, how much multimedia functions it has, if you can't Lite something as simple as call, you'll get angry at your phone," she said.

Other features

You can also use the Omnia to send MMS and make video calls.

Other Omnia features include GPS, FM

Motorola's latest MP3 phon
with its sleek design and outs

KAREN Nasir performs at a media

Text and photos
by Bianca Consunji
BM Correspondent

TAKE A LOOK AT THE contents of your bag. If it's a bottomless pit of gadgets that takes forever to rummage through, you might want to consider simplifying the mobile aspect of your life by picking just one gadget that does everything for you.

However, this is usually easier said than done. Internet phones, by themselves, aren't so good in regular cameras, even if they have the same megapixel value. The same goes for phones with wired processors and video cameras.

Luckily, this isn't the case with music phones. Many cellular phones/MP3 players can now give iPods a run for their money. While MP3 only phones aren't new to the market, they are rapidly getting better every year, design- and quality-wise.

Various functions

Motorola recently launched its new Rokr E8 in Manila [inexpensive Malaysia]. Journalists were invited to try out the Rokr E8 to see event that had people hopping from line to line in experiment with the various functions of the phone. Loud performers Bird and Karen Nasir regaled the crowd with rock music, as phones and their accompanying accessories were raffled off to guests.

The latest in the brand's line of MP3 phones, the Rokr E8 combines the current crop of music phones with its sleek, cutting-edge design and surrounding performance. Wired with the Rokr E8 apart from most phones is the use

MOTOROLA executive Ian Chapman thanks Karen the Rokr E8.

of the new MotoMaker technology, as opposed to the conventional keypad.

Ross Lowe, users of the Rokr E8 may be taken aback by its appearance, as it looks nothing like a phone. Instead, it looks like a smooth black pencil of glass. Upon handling it, however, the phone's touch-pad controls digitally morph into the functions that you need to use.

So, depending on what you want to do, the phone will look like a click-wheel MP3 player or a conventional cell phone.

The flat "glass" surface of the phone offers a huge benefit to clumsy phone users. Since it has a non-porous surface, any cookie where the keypad should be), you can spill liquid on top of it and it will wouldn't get damaged. Of course, it doesn't matter you can bring it to pool with it, but occasional coffee spills will no longer spell disaster for your phone.

Other features

The phone's other features include the CyberLink bundled-in [which allows] the user to con-

PHILIPPINE media group with Petronas Towers in background

vert a voluminous conversation over with it to any background). Windows Mobile Phone 6.1, it is

unregulated camera and a
HTML browser.

The phone can support
thousand songs with its 2GB
build memory, and even more
you use an external memory
card. You can also watch video
on its 2-inch, 262,000-color
play screen.

Frequent travelers will appr
ciate its quad-band function
which means it can be used
(with every country. Plus, it
can connect the phone to
computer via USB connectio
making it easier to downloa
songs quickly.

While some people insist
ing can replace a stand-alo
music players, it's rewarding
give the Rokr E8 a try. It's
modern look, exceptional
quality and handy feature
might just change your mind.

*E-mail the author at bianca
entitlephone.com*

TOUCH SCREEN campaign in Singapore

THE PANEL at the press conference

radio, a torchlight, handwriting recognition and even a business card reader that can scan business cards and automatically store the data in your phone.

Rita believes users should explore the phone on their own to find out just how many things they can do with it. "The users should experience the rich contents and discover all kinds of functionality," he said.

Star of the show

People had the chance to do just that at Communicasia 2008.

The Samsung booth showed a wide range of their products including their Olympic phones and the results of some of their recent tie-ups with Giorgio Armani, Adidas and Bang & Olufsen.

But the Omnia was clearly the star of the show.

A number of users had been made available at the booth for people to enjoy their own Omnia experience.

There was even a larger-than-life model to allow consumers to see the Omnia's touch-screen functions and drag-and-drop capabilities on a bigger scale.

"Why'd definitely find the connection," Lee said. "Once the market gets to know the Omnia, I'm sure they would love it."

ATTENDEES got the chance to experience the Omnia.

Other drool-worthy gadgets at Communicasia 2008

Here are our Samsung booth picks

The gadget: Soul
The specs: HSDPA 7.2 Mbps, GPRS/EDGE/GSM, 5-MP camera, multi and face detection, Magical Touch, Bluetooth, USB 2.0, can play MP3/WMA/e-AAC+/multi-lingual text/MMF, FM radio, Video telephony, 100MB internal memory, external memory: Microsd
Why it's cool: You can use it for mobile blogging and it is equipped with a Bang & Olufsen speaker

The gadget: Jtouch
The specs: HSDPA 3.6 Mbps, GPRS/EDGE/GSM, 3.2 MP camera, 8.0 HTML browser, Bluetooth, USB 2.0, can play MP3/AAC/AAC+/e-AAC+/WMA/Rh, Video player/editor, FM radio, 8GB internal memory, external memory: Microsd
Why it's cool: It comes in five sexy colors...and [you] get platinum silver, metallic black, steel pink, smoothie white and red

The gadget: L700
The specs: GSM/GPRS/EDGE, 2 MP camera, instant messaging/tools, document viewer, mobile blog, video, FM radio, Bluetooth, USB 2.0
Why it's cool: The bar-type phone is equipped with 3G (WEDGE) network which makes bold-ing video conversations a breeze.

The gadget: TouchWiz
The specs: HSDPA 7.2 Mbps, GPRS/EDGE/GSM, 3 MP camera, multi and face detection, Magical Touch, Bluetooth, USB 2.0, Music Player, FM radio, 2GB internal memory, external memory: Microsd
Why it's cool: Because it's touch screen, baby. TouchWiz also comes with a luxury leather case.

e outstripe the competition
standing performance

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Brentville:
A Fully-developed International Community

No need to travel miles to experience the world over. It's all here at Brentville International, the flagship project of top property developer Filinvest Land, Inc. It is located just 15 minutes away from Alabang and it is all set to cater to those who deeply value exclusivity and comfort.

The Mediterranean-themed international community, located in the progressive town of Biñan, Laguna, is now fully developed with its world-class style of land development in place and all of its facilities and amenities functioning.

So, dreams of that dream house no longer. Buyers can move in to Brentville's ready-for-occupancy units and instantly get a taste of the luxurious and comfortable lifestyle that you have always wanted.

From its architecture to its diverse community, Brentville surely lives up to its commitment of providing world-class living. Its exclusive retention setting exudes the young and cosmopolitan lifestyle that you won't experience elsewhere.

And that's not all. Buyers could also get their hands on top-notch privileges that are uniquely Brentville's.

World-class facilities

Each of the seven residential clusters has a secured entrance, a guardhouse, a playground, and a cabana. Inspired by Mediterranean architecture, homes are accented with cathedral-high ceilings, huge windows and minimalist, elegant interiors.

On weekends, homeowners can choose to escape the heavy Metro traffic and organize picnics or barbecue parties right at the generous grounds of Brentville. Residents could also beat the heat during the summer at the resort clubhouse's infinity pool or sport those athletic muscles on the tennis and basketball courts.

Aside from the tree-lined and landscaped sidewalks, a morning walk is also made relaxing and less city-like-feeling with vines and rattles laid underground.

Unique privileges

Buying a home at Brentville also means an automatic ticket to a luxurious and leisurely lifestyle that you simply can't resist.

Prominence of residents are treated to a membership share in the exclusive Palms Country Club in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang for five years and get exclusive access to a wide range of services and facilities that the premiere private club offers. Buyers of a single-detached unit are also appointed as nominees for one membership share.

Another distinct privilege is the Brent-Brentville Privilege Program (BBPP). Through this, residents gain access to the world-class facilities in the Brent International School located just within the community. Residents can use the campus' Olympic-sized pool, its all-weather track and field, and its state-of-the-art electronic library among many others. With a diverse crop of students coming from more than forty countries, residents are treated to a unique World Cup experience once kids take on the football field.

24-hour security

Brentville guarantees its residents a worry-free and a peaceful night's sleep. With two security teams roving around the neighborhood 24/7, homeowners are ensured of a quiet and safe environment.

The "blue" guards of Brentville and the "white" guards of the Brent School check all vehicles coming in and out of the village. All entrances are secured as there are separate guardhouses at the main gate and your community.

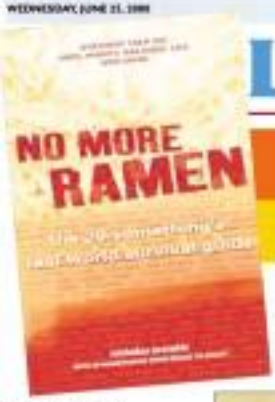
International neighborhood

What better way to complete the "world-class" feel than the community itself?

Brentville is home to different nationalities making it a community of cultural diversity. Residents can build friendships with people from around the world and who knows, maybe your child can learn how to say "hello" in six different languages in no time.

Brentville is a prime community under the Filinvest Premiere brand. One of the country's leading property developers, Filinvest Land, Inc. offers a wide array of themed communities, conveniently situated in various parts of the country to give you unlimited options and a choice of living experiences.

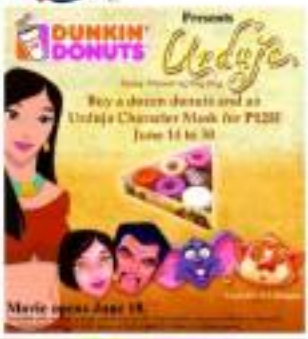
If you want to experience Brentville's world-class living and gain access to these fabulous privileges, you may inquire at 807-5511 or visit our website www.brentville.com.



LIFESTYLE

Career noodling

Career adviser and 'Ramen' author Nicholas Aretakis gives tips on how best to chart one's career after graduation



By Raissi Alvin C. Liquete
2DU Contributor

NICHOLAS ARETAKIS, author of "No More Ramen," went on an interview blitz to catch the questions and concerns of 200 20-somethings from UCLA, Harvard, Columbia, Arizona State, University of Arizona, Boston University, Bishop College, University of Minnesota, MIT, Kansas State, Penn State, and University of Central Florida.

He also held discussions with students from DeVry Institute, University of Michigan, University of Texas, Skidmore, Tufts University, SUNY Albany, Cornell University, Stanford, Yale, University of California at Berkley and even dozens of colleges and technical schools.

His goal? To help college graduates define and determine the best career path after graduation.

In this 2DU interview, Aretakis gives practical advice on issues such as money management, finding the right job, getting an advanced degree, and gearing yourself for success after college.

Can you tell us more about what you wanted to do after graduation?

I wanted to leverage my technical degrees [BS Electrical Engineering, BA Mathematics minor in Computer Science] but also to go into the business side, marketing and eventually sales. I set some short- and long-term goals and objectives, and modified or enhanced them every three to six months.

What did you give up standing in for?

I really never had my heart set on a specific job until my last year of high school, and then I started thinking about going into engineering. When I went through the rigor of college, I knew I could do the technical stuff, but I really wanted to work with people. I then aspired to find a position in business, specifically marketing or sales, that would leverage a technical background. My end goal was to go into management. I had found myself as a leader in most of my undergraduate as a young adult, and wanted to leverage with similar success in industry. I find a second passion for writing, which led me to found Your Image Press when I had the financial wherewithal to pursue this dream.

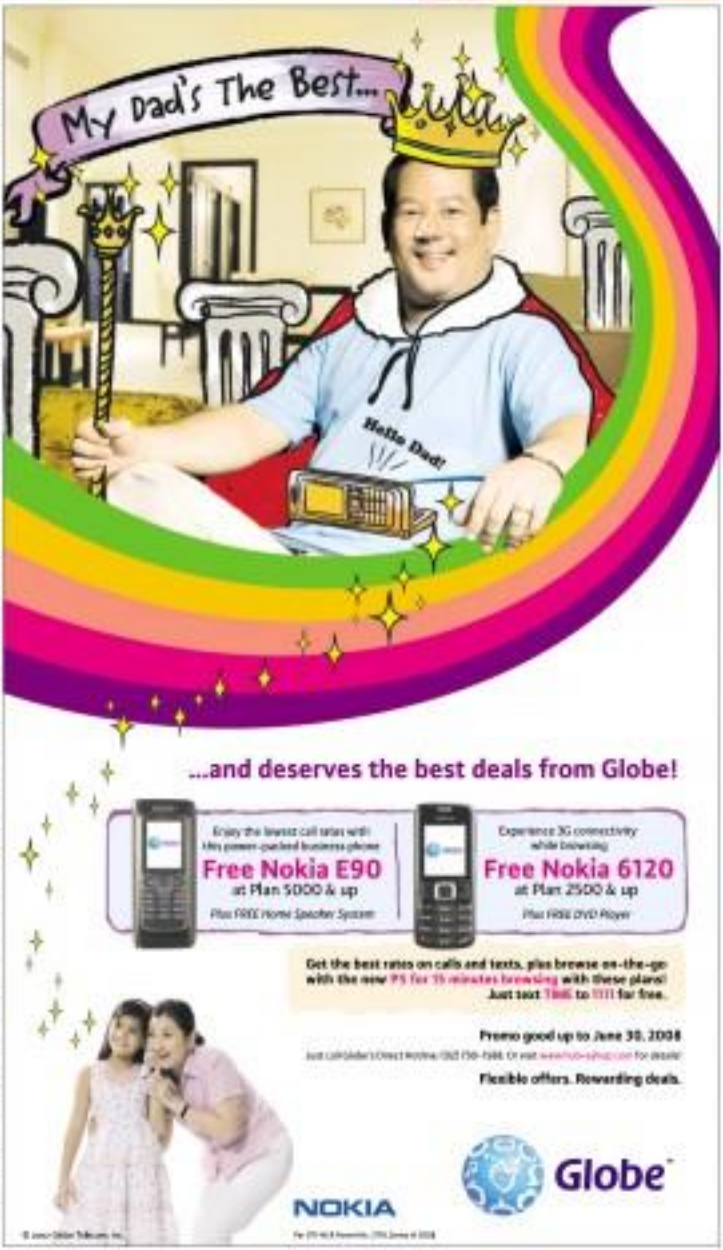
Is there a particular job hunting method that worked best for you? Any tips on what to do and not to do?

I created several downloadable templates on my website that you are free to reference. They talk about tapping into your college's career counseling office, building a network of family, friends, colleagues, classmates and professors; finding people that have jobs in interesting fields; gaining an understanding of a particular job; communicating contacts that provide introductions; utilizing third-party online services such as LinkedIn, JIACLink, Monster, CareerBuilder, CareerBoom.com online classifieds, Craigslist.com, etc. re-searching on recruiting industries by checking their websites, searching for companies in a similar field, uncovering prospects, identifying similar employers, conducting competitive [Google] searches, researching the background of the company and the management team, etc.

What advice would you give to college graduates who still don't know what to do for a career?

Take a "get-to-know-yourself" test (provided on our website and most college career sites). Try to find that delicate intersection between what you like to do and where you have some talent, skill, experience or related coursework. Spend some time researching potential careers that overlap with many of the aforementioned. Talk to people to see that you want to have as interest in, and start outlining some of your basic interests—e.g. marketing, sales, advertising, engineering, consulting, computer-related.

For instance, if you are a highly outgoing person, and you enjoy speaking with different people, a sales position may be good. If



DECONSTRUCTED: the panna cotta

READY to fry

CHEF Aaron Atanacio on the science of baking

SAVORING the caramel sauce

How to cure your kitchen phobia

Take this class and find out if you have what it takes to be a student chef

HOW many hands does it take to stir broth: a lot?

THEY'RE not afraid of the kitchen anymore

CHEF Manny Gimenez explains how to cook salmon.

THE AUTHOR and group pose with Chef Manny

Text by Rainy de Vera
Photos by Gil Bicaro

I PRIDE MYSELF ON BEING independent, but the only kitchen equipment I own is the microwave and the lowly rice cooker. My roommate, happily, owns the stove in the apartment. Without someone to cook for me, I resort to one of the following: eating out, takeouts, or opening a can of something and calling it. I'm also a fan of the just-add-hot-water variety.

When my roommate learned that I enrolled in the Kitchen Discovery Class of the Center of Culinary Arts (CCA), she offered to call CCA to waive them that there might not be a CCA at the end of the day I turned my friends along, just in case. They wouldn't leave me alone in a burning building.

The Kitchen Discovery Class used to be a prerequisite for students of the two-year Culinary Arts course, but due to its popularity it was offered as a separate one-day course. After the course, students should be able to decide whether or not they have what it takes to be in the kitchen.

Cookout for beginners

On the day of the class, we were handed our uniforms consisting of a shirt, apron, and a hat. I had never owned an apron, ever. There would be two sessions—cooking in the morning, and baking in the afternoon.

Chef Manny Gimenez, one of the founders of CCA, said that the gauge of how good our dish was, if we'd be willing to pay for it. He divided the class into three groups, and we proceeded to the "Laboratory."

The Laboratory is a huge kitchen with pots and pans of all sizes, knives, chopping boards, and all sorts of cooking contraptions. There was also a fire extinguisher near the stove. Cool.

We were going to make Caramelized Salmon with Orange-Thyme Glaze with Sauteed Mixed Vegetables, Soba Noodles, Lemongrass Beurre Blanc, and Balsamic-Soy Reduction. I was tasked to peel the vegetables while the others gathered the ingredients. Moments later I managed to peel some skin off my fingers.

At one point they asked me to operate the stove, but I couldn't light it and there was a gas smell already so I turned it off. Someone took over and threw water on it. Another fire is quite normal, and I screamed. My roommate was probably right.

Everybody sautéed, fried, switched, stirred, and reduced for two hours. It was teenage and at the same time fun to see my friends cooking. Half of them were in underwear and the rest had not stopped from one station to another to see who had the best brown-bum sauce.

Chef Manny went around tasting the dishes, and he declared everything was great. We had to eat what we cooked and I remember wishing I had an anaphylaxis so I could have the whole dish to myself. It was that good.

Breezy baking

For the baking class, we had to do Saffron Panna Cotta with Citrus Caramel Sauce and Almond Truffle. I had no idea what a truffle was. Chef Anne Atanacio was our instructor for the baking class, and she explained that while cooking is an instinctive process, baking is an exact science.

First, she showed us how to do the whole thing, especially the last that involved gelatin (should be "bloomed in" first by adding water to it, before dumping in a simmering mixture. We wouldn't have known that if chef Anne didn't come to our lives.

In baking, measurements should be exact. With the precision of scientists searching for the wonder drug, we held our breath while measuring ingredients. I had fun pouring the strained panna cotta liquid into rounded glasses to set, being careful not to drink it around the sides of the glass.

The hardest part was segmenting the oranges and making the caramel. We were lucky we had FUN, because our orange segments were wonderfully done. The trick to making the caramel, chef Anne said, is not to touch the mixture of sugar and water until it thickens.

Jamie, Glen and Lauren's caramel sauce almost didn't make it—chef Anne had her candy and made it one round again. Still was too busy laughing at their incident that he forgot his own caramel was cooking on the stove.

If the caramel sauce was hard, the almond truffle was tricky. The truffles were supposed to be formed into different shapes while still hot, but we didn't make that temperature requirement and broke off mixture. In spite of that, our panna cotta rocked.

CARAMELIZED Salmon with Sauteed Veggies

SAFFRON Panna Cotta with Orange Caramel Sauce

No more kitchen scars

The whole day of cooking left us all tired and sweaty, but we were all proud of ourselves. Our undomestic selves actually produced something delicious and pretty and we would definitely not mind if we had to pay for it. Some of us had tried cooking the dishes at home, and got good reviews. I don't know if I could cook it on my own, but for now I can say I am less intimidated of the stove.

For inquiries about the Kitchen Discovery Class and other courses, CCA is located: 207 Estipanio Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, or you may call them at (02) 426-6001.

CHOP and slice, chop and slice

Career noodling

From page C1

you don't like to travel, maybe you would consider an in-house marketing position. If you are good at creative writing, maybe you would want to do something in advertising, PR, work for a media company, etc.

What's better—working for a company or building your own business?

I think both are mandatory to succeed. It is extremely valuable to see how business runs, the good and bad attributes, and to learn from them. Good biz process, as well as entrepreneurial and managerial skills, sales, marketing, finance, engineering, PR, human resources, benefits, etc. I've worked for small- and medium-sized businesses, including several start-up ventures.

It was certainly advantageous for me to operate in those frenetic environments, and I learned valuable lessons that saved me a significant amount of money and energy.

What can you do if you can't find a job related to your major after graduation?

Try to find a job that will provide basic experience applicable to a future job more to your wish when you desire. Gain valuable general experience. Another option is to take some training or coursework that can help position you in better options later on. This is why it is extremely valuable to conduct internships, preferably paid, but even unpaid. If you can afford the time and financial resources, an advanced degree may also be a consideration. The last resort is what I would call a "place-holder" job, just to provide sustenance. You need to pay your bills, and the quicker you can generate some cash flow, the sooner you can find better options.

How do you convince someone to hire you once you find a job you want?

It starts with polishing your resumé, then trying to make a good impression if you are given an interview. You want to dress appropriately, do as much research and preparation for the interview and ensure that you follow up professionally and follow established protocol.

What do you do if you don't get the job you applied for?

You need to consider other options. Very few people go to college with expectations on a specific degree, complete the required coursework, and then pursue a career in a specific field. Most people actually find their careers by accident or "kind and error."

What advice can you give to navigate the worlds of graduation and employment?

Develop a plan, document it, and commit it to your path. Experience—whether this includes brain-exercising, working different jobs and from general life experiences. It is also critical to develop short- and long-term personal and professional objectives. I encourage young adults to put together a comprehensive budget, and several companies are downloadable from my website for free.

HAGBOKSAKMAG

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

A LIFIN

BY JOEL ABROGA

FULDOK

BY PATU AND TATUM HILARIBILING

PUSONG BAKOD

BY RM JUNIOR

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABUALAN

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

GLUMPIK

BY DARWIN PEREZ

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMO AND YEBOT

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

LOWSHOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHOMKO

KIKO MACHINE

BY FRANK ABRERA

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

By Doug Peterson
Pasadena, CA

9/22/05

Sunday's Puzzle Solved

ACROSS
1 Small fuss
6 "Hullo there!"
11 Jewel
14 Nonchalantly aloof
15 Discovery locale
16 Latin lapse
17 Philadelphia ice stage
18 Tasteless nap
19 Philosophers
21 Mighty snakes
23 Loss covering
24 Poetic infinitive
25 Part of
28 Amateur engineer
29 Iron partner (Nolan)
30 Hannah and Helen
34 Comedic victory
37 Gen. Grenville's daughter
38 Alloy
41 Cicadas
42 Poet Ogden
43 Back for a second
44 Porno Jack of Hollywood
46 Dread one
48 Work hazards
51 Opera aria
52 Cheers
54 Cell body
55 Remaining portion
DEFIANCE
61 Wastebasket lad
62 Hip-hop quartet, at a set
63 Hide's address
64 Save a bestie?
65 Glittering objects
66 Cut
67 USA state
68 Hubbard
69 Ire

DOWN
1 Meat head on
2 One of GB rabbi
3 Some encounters
4 Aerobics Getty
5 Gain Lady's favor
6 Lindsay Lohan's movie
7 Wrongful
8 Peruvian
9 Nourish
10 Legal
11 Dogpatch
DEFIANT
12 Hints at
13 Was it at
22 ___ as an arrow
26 Labyrinth
27 Mafia figure
31 Bolivia
32 Point of origin
33 Nature's
35 Rouse
36 Physician's degree
39 Behind with a lack
40 Rock band supplement
42 Lo-fi
45 Rock bed stop
47 Recession in debt
49 Lady Gaga
50 Lear namer
53 Cheyenne's river
56 Hawaii tour stands
57 Tranquilizer
58 Cheese choice
59 Spaghetti or ziti
60 Nicaragua source
62 Play-by-play
63 "Mrs. M" singer
67 Translation limit
68 Land of ranches
69 Rocks of ages, e.g.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

THIS WEEK TODAY: You have a free mind. You are quick to understand how human behavior works. You also have the capacity for being able to realize your dreams. You are the master of your own fate. You are the only person who can make you happy. Your personal relationships are extraordinary. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): It's new to you, but others have been there, done that. Today, you might not even know who I am. You have the ability to see things in a way that others cannot. Your personal relationships are extraordinary. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Someone wants to share something with you. Your personal relationships are extraordinary. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Because you feel insecure about something figured out. Today, you might not even know who I am. You have the ability to see things in a way that others cannot. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Hard work might be rewarded today. Workers valuable to themselves, especially, the marks and angles could be surprising or upsetting. Your personal

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Make friends with someone today. Stay on top of your work today. You have the ability to see things in a way that others cannot. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Others give you a new perspective today. Stay on top of your work today. You have the ability to see things in a way that others cannot. You have original thinker. Make changes continue as significant as around 1999-2000. (sagittarius@aol.com) Copyright 2005 Francis Drake

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Expect an unexpected change in your daily work. Complete projects, assess and open the doors and shift budgets as you see fit. Be things that might create some problems.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Someone romantic should be on your mind today. Complete projects, assess and open the doors and shift budgets as you see fit. Be things that might create some problems.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Changes in the workplace or home today. Things will not be as planned. Unexpected changes are coming for. People are moody! (You need to be patient.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is an excellent time day to accomplish your goals. You might need extra time or personal help. Your daily routine could be disrupted. Stick to the basics and you'll be in a good position.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might feel moody today! You could be in a position to do something. Money is on the line. Investments and partnerships look favorable. Be careful not to overdo it. Don't do more than you can handle.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Someone you feel indecisive to. Be as careful this week. Don't do more than you can handle. Pay attention to your moods, particularly with personal relationships. You might get unexpected reactions that you might take to heart.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Concepts Sudoku

By Elena Casas

	8	3	7	1	9			
		1			2	3	4	
		6			5			8
	3					5		4
6							8	9
1						6		
	9				7			
		7			3			
			5	6				

Difficulty Level ★★★

9/21

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	1	8	7	2	3	9	4	5
2	9	5	6	1	4	7	3	8
4	3	7	9	5	8	6	2	1
3	5	2	4	6	7	1	8	9
9	4	6	8	3	1	2	5	7
8	7	1	5	9	2	3	6	4
1	8	3	2	7	5	4	9	6
5	2	9	1	4	6	8	7	3
7	6	4	3	8	9	5	1	2

DELEGATES posing off at the Cathay City tour

AT OCEAN Park, Hong Kong

GOLD team members from the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Brunei and Bangladesh with the competition's board of judges

Young entreps' bright idea? Stick-on tattoo

By Bianca Consunji
20/C Correspondent

"I CHOOSE TO BE EXTRA-preneur because then you create value," John Gokongwei once said. "Choose to be an entrepreneur because you desire a life of adventure, endless challenge, and the opportunity to be your best self."

If the super-rich has inspired you to believe), then the students who joined the annual HSBC Young Entrepreneur Awards (YEA) are in for a lifetime of adventure. The business plan competition was launched in Hong Kong in 2000, and has since expanded to seven countries in Asia, including Bangladesh, Brunei, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

This year, 1,185 teams—a total of 5,000 students—joined the YEA. Three teams from each country (the gold, silver and bronze finalists) flew to Hong Kong to participate in the workshops held by HSBC and the Asia Pacific Institute of Business of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Only the gold teams were allowed to join the competition proper to vie for the top prize of HK$100,000 (approximately P570,000).

Two teams from Ateneo de Manila University and one from University of the Philippines Diliman made it to the finals. The bronze team was composed of Mark Razo and Dindi Swabe, both Business Administration majors from 10 (silver) were to Wyn Irene Quiros, Mary-Cheih and Kimille Carbo, Legal Management graduates from Ateneo.

However, it was the gold team composed of Katrina Ursula Macaraig, Monard Ducusin and Elaine Aldea (King) that presented its proposal to the board of judges in Hong Kong. The team came up with Photosound, a spray-on acoustic wall application made of corn sheaths. Their proposal had won the Ben Business Innovation Award at the training of the YEA.

Macaraig said, "We've been working on the project since our marketing course in junior year. We saw the need for it because students were constantly bothered by the noise outside the classroom, but sound-proofing can be a rather expensive process."

King added, "Photosound was invented by our friend Ahmed Lai, who watched a formula made by a faculty member of the school. The advantage of the product over the usual forms of acoustic insulation is it can be applied over any kind of finishing, and is minimal cost."

During the competition proper, the teams were allowed 10 minutes to present their business proposal, with a three-minute interrogation from the judges afterward.

TEAM Symphony from Thailand clinches the grand prize.

STAYING calm during the Q&A portion

Contest has interesting yields. Philippine team has spray-on acoustic wall application made of corn sheaths

ATENEO'S Katrina Ursula Macaraig, Monard Ducusin and Elaine Aldea (King)

First prize

However, it was not the Philippines that walked away with the grand prize. Team Symphony from Thailand, composed of Supratinee Liedhikulsil, Thitiarn Limmeechokchai, and Pitsinipa Rittaksongdechkul from Thammasat University, won both Best Presentation and Best of the Best awards. They will receive a check, a set of laptop computers and the HK$100,000 cash prize. Their winning project? Lotsh, a line of stick-on temporary tattoo cosmetics.

Eric Stokes, chief executive officer of World Wide Fund (WWF) Hong Kong and one of the competition judges, said, "It was a good idea, and a good idea should always win. I am familiar with the luxury industry, and I feel that [their project] was unique. Their presentation was focused and well-paced, and they worked hard."

Levelheaded said, "We're very interested in cosmetics, but we discovered a lot of problems with their staying power. Plus, we didn't want to lug around too many items in our makeup kit."

Unimpressed, added, "We're targeting to answer the unmet needs of young ladies, 'tweens' in particular. They need makeup that gives them a variety of looks at low cost, something they can practice with without buying an entire compact. For an older age group, are more looking for something easy to carry around and is waterproof."

The most difficult part of the presentation, they all agreed, was the time limit. "We had to practice our presentations so it would be perfect for the allotted 10 minutes. At first we had to shave off one minute, then 30 seconds. It took a lot of practice," Rittaksongdechkul said.

Despite not winning first place, the Philippine team was no pushover. Team Photosound came in third after Thailand and Bangladesh, which did a project on worm fertilizer. "Thailand won, but our team did a good job of representing the Philippines," said Trudy Ang, dean of the Ateneo John Gokongwei School of Management. "Our students were really thorough, and despite the hard questions, they knew everything. However, the competition is more competitive now—your chances of breaking through are statistically lower."

He added, "We join international competitions like this to see if our students can hold up against the region's best. We're not, I look at presentations like this as a learning process. It's a source of pride that our academe and our educators is world-class."

Aside from participating in the competition proper, all the students went through leadership training sessions and team-building activities. They also visited several companies to listen to inspirational talks from the executives of Cathay Pacific, Caliber Point Trust Co. and Ocean Park Hong Kong.

"Reaching this far, and learning so many things to be able to make it to this level already means something," said Dimano. "And we learned that we just have to be able to believe in ourselves and what we have to offer. The Young Entrepreneur Awards is more than a competition—it's a learning experience."

E-mail the author at bianca.consunji@yahoo.com

Hairloss is wrecking her life and she doesn't know why.

Thinning hair makes a woman look older. When your hair's health, shine and bounce weaken, it seems your personality is likewise affected. Self-consciousness, diminished self-esteem, even bouts of depression may occur.

Most women who have gone through this harrowing experience say they tried everything to stop hairloss, from special treatments at the salon, to a whole range of over-the-counter products. But nothing worked. Sadly, many "remedies" may have actually made the condition worse. Until they found out the reasons why they were losing hair, little could be done to end the problem.

Possible reasons for hairloss.

Women's hairloss can be caused by hormonal changes. Female Pattern Baldness (or Androgenetic Alopecia) is a reaction to male hormones in the body (androgens) which can weaken a woman's hair. Other factors can be stress, poor nutrition, illnesses and reaction to certain medications, childbirth and menopause, frequent coloring, curling, straightening, and many more. Most causes of hairloss, when they are correctly identified, can be treated with good results.

Getting the facts on why you are losing hair.

Trichology is the study of the functions and problems of hair. A trichologist is someone who has been educated in the subject and is qualified to determine the reasons why your hair is not in good health.

Where do you find a trichologist? One name that has been synonymous with Professional Trichology in the Philippines for more than 25 years: Svensson. Svensson trichologists will examine your hair and scalp and give you advice on what to do.

A trichologist – what does it cost?

Nothing. Svensson trichologists offer an in-depth Hair & Scalp analysis totally free of charge.

Pre-hairloss symptoms.

Before your hair starts falling out, be aware of early warning signs such as persistent dandruff, flaking, and scalp irritations. Hair hairloss – see a trichologist when you see these signs!

These visible indications are unobtrusive, and when combined with dirt in the atmosphere, shampoo chemicals or excess oil/sweat, they can block follicles, badly affecting hair growth.

Treatments to help your hair.

Depending on the findings of your Hair & Scalp analysis, you can decide on treatment programs including:

ULTRA HAIR REINFORCER – deep cleans scalp, creates healthier environment for growth. Hair becomes thicker, shinier, more lush.

ULTRA-LUSH VOLUMIZER – quickly controls and stops hair fall, helps restore original hairmass, volume and softness.

SCALP-CORRECTIVE – eliminates dandruff, flaking and other irritations, returns scalp to normal state, prevents your more hairloss.

Make an appointment today to see a trichologist free of charge.
Call Svensson at 892-4347/
234-3851(Cebu).

XAVIELLE Castro and Missy Cinco of Ateneo with Mark Razo and Dindi Peralta from UP Diliman

FELIPE friends, Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Hello Kitty

Benefit run draws thousands, including Hello Kitty

THE 2ND JAPAN AIRLINES (JAL) Run for a cause recently drew over a thousand runners in an event whose beneficiaries were the Aytas in the Tean City in Porac, Pampanga.

Hello Kitty especially flew in from Japan exclusively for the fundraising event, thanks to the efforts of the JAL team led by Toshio Morita.

Celebrities who joined the run included

MORE PICS

Blogs for shutterbugs

Photo enthusiasts will love these community sites

By Nico Mark M. Sablan
INQUIRER Correspondent

IT WOULD BE NICE TO SAY THAT photographers take pictures so that one can show it to others. And with the Internet, showing off your shots has become so much easier.

Joining a community blog can help promote your photos even more, as you reach more like-minded individuals. The following sites are packed with images that will surely keep you clicking and uploading for some time.

Fotojournals

http://community.livejournal.com/fotojournals

"Think of this site as photographers' show-and-tell session, or better yet an online exhibit. Post your eyes on image after image after image.

Styles abound, from black-and-white to macro shots, from night shots to personal portraits. Subjects range from favorite relatives to beloved pets, challenging action shots to landscapes and vacation photos.

Whatever style or subject you fancy, you are sure to find it here. And since it is a community blog, you can always join, upload your own photos and patiently wait for the comments of other members.

The Polaroids

http://community.livejournal.com/the_polaroids

Camera company Polaroid recently announced that it would no longer produce Polaroid cameras, much to

MORE

Leading a balanced life can take me even further

It takes a lot of energy to do the things I do.

The harder I play, the bigger my appetite gets.
The more I eat, the further I can go.

With the right balance of all the things
that make me happy, I can have
as much as I want of the things I truly enjoy.

Asi Taulava
Basketball Player

A balanced life is a Sparkling Life.

SMART Buddy
D2 lang me may REWARDS!
Register at text get your bonus rewards points instantly! Text REWARDS to 9005

HOT picks from the bohemian shopping fiesta

Lovin' the hippie flea market

THE WEEKEND HIPPIE FLEA MARKET IN A Venue Mall, along Makati Avenue, offered a bohemian-themed experience, with new wave and new designers gathered under one roof.

The hippie market had fashion on one side and a cat show on the other. It was a different experience shopping for bags, necklaces, graphic shirts, funky shoes, even aromatic scents—many of which have only been seen online on Multiply shops.

Here are some of our hot picks from the event. (By Isabelle Lorenzo-Reyes)

Catch the next Hippie Flea Market on Sept. 6-7. It will be your turn to open Beth from more young artists and entrepreneurs.

Visit http://hippiefleamarket.multiply.com

Am I destined to be alone?

DEAR JEWEL,

Sometimes I have these moments of self-doubt—that I'm not pretty enough to be noticed, or that I will never find someone to be with for the rest of my life.

I know I shouldn't be thinking of these things, but when I see unflattering pictures of me, it somehow validates the insecure in my mind. I want to believe I'm beautiful, but there's no inside material to tell me so (not even hemoled).

I know these thoughts won't do me any good, but I can't help thinking that if it's not my looks, maybe it's my personality. Maybe it's even my fate to be alone. Help me gain a little perspective.

Christina

Dear Christina,

I have a friend, this wonderful, amazing lady who has never gotten about the fact that she's over 40 and single.

I once asked her if she ever thought of someday getting married and having a family. After all, there's that thing called a biological clock. She admitted to remarking that helped her see singlehood in a different way.

"If I meet someone who is willing to accept my flaws and still regard me as beautiful, and I am willing to do the same for him, then I will get married. Until then, I have no desire to settle for anything less. I will not have children just because I'm getting old, or that I'm afraid no one will take care of me in my old age."

When you wake up in the morning, go straight to the mirror and look at your reflection, (morning hair and all). Tell yourself, "I am beautiful, inside and out". Say it aloud and repeat it until you believe it.

Everybody has bad pictures.

Jewel

Repeat after me: I am beautiful, inside and out

Dear Jewel,

For some strange reason, some of my exes' current positions are trying to befriend me. Honestly, I can't help but raise a brow with their gesture. I don't want to put malice in it or anything, but I really think there's no point in doing this. Is this their way of "keeping your enemies closer?"

Valerie

Dear Valerie,

Who knows? Maybe, maybe not. Let's give them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps they really just want to be friends. You know, as a sign that they don't mind that you still exist.

That's all love and family, but you're right—there's no point in doing this. Is this their way of "keeping your enemies closer?" Is there no point in befriending the ex of the boyfriend.

Nobody will believe the sincerity of the effort, and the fact that you've both kissed the same man can't be fun. Valerie things you have to continue to be friends.

If you don't want to be friends with them, then so be it. You won't be ostracized. Miss Congeniality if you keep being nice to them, anyway.

Men might be pigs but women are evil.

Jewel

Dear Jewel,

I'm gay and I have a crush on this guy. I haven't had a relationship yet, and I don't know how to proceed. It's unusual to be a relationship virgin at my age. I know you're ah, straight, but I'm really hoping you could help me out. How do I tell this guy that I like him?

Scrooge

Dear Scrooge,

First of all, are you out? Because if you're not, then please do me a favor and scream it out at the top of your lungs.

When I say out, I mean out to your family and closest friends, and not only in the ones you (possibly) hook up with on gaydemers.com. It might be hard to do, but I promise you everything will fall into place once you don't have to pretend anymore.

Gay relationships are the same as the straight ones. You generally have to be friends first, go out a few times, and if you think you have enough in common, then that's it.

But, of course, it has to be mutual. Don't go straight to the guy and profess your undying love and scare him in the process. Find out first what he's like, if he's single, and if you somehow think. Take it from there.

I might be straight but I am surrounded by the most fabulous gay people in the city.

Jewel

STRETCHING before the run

ON YOUR marks...

Benefit run . . .

Turn to page E7

Derek Ramsay, Bianca Gonzalez, Ani Teodoro and Tessa Prieto-Valdes, who came in her best Hello Kitty-running outfit, complete with Hello Kitty earrings, a mascot on her back and tiara on her head.

The run was kicked off by stretching and warm-up exercise exercises that were led by Bench Underwear star Cynthia Garcia, who later joined the crowd and completed the three-kilometer course, while holding a Superheroes of Tourism banner.

Tessa ran the 3km-kilometer course and later, the three-kilometer course.

Starting July 1, JAL will be utilizing the Boeing 747-400 aircraft for flights between Tokyo-Narita and Manila.

Economy passengers will benefit from JAL's exclusive Hapi individual in-flight entertainment system with personal television screens and a wide range of programs, movies and games.

The 747-400 also makes more business class seats available to the business traveler.

HAPPY waiting to an award for a good cause. Ben says donacion ipera guarantees or thank you very much.

CROWD cuddles Hello Kitty.

Our tricky art of matchmaking

Our attempts at setting people up have been so successful that we're starting to think of charging for the service

By Pam Pastor

AS IF OUR LIVES WEREN'T busy enough, my friends and I decided to add another role—matchmaker.

I'm surprised I'm giving this another go. My first attempt at setting people up was a disaster. It was back in high school and it didn't end well. I had to make a very unpleasant call asking the guy to unsee my classmate's breast helper. I never found out how the boys ended up with him. I didn't want to know.

Then again, that attempt at playing cupid was destined for failure. My only basis for setting them up was that he liked girls and she liked boys.

But apparently in the world of matchmaking, this second time's the charm.

Nick and Rachael

Feeling like they needed a little push, a couple of weeks ago, a friend and I decided to set up a fake blind date for our friends Nick and Rachael. We called it a fake blind date because Nick knew who his date would be. Rachael, who was kept in the dark, didn't figure out quickly as I would have assumed. But I knew they would really hit it off. "You have to trust me on this," I drilled her and she finally chose a time and place.

The two met for coffee at four in the afternoon. Their date lasted until almost two in the morning and was followed by another and another and another. In less than a month, they had seen two Broadway shows, had their own key to each other's apartments and were holding each other's hands.

Their blossoming romance has given all of us such a huge thrill and has set off a flurry of text, MMS and online messages. "Spotted, the lovers at Shangri-La mall," one MMS read.

Project number two

Matchmaking project number two was the brainchild of another friend. Actually it involved more action than thinking. She searched one guy's mobile phone in the middle of a party and did what he had warned to do to her mercilessly—tell the girl of his dreams text on a date. When she told me, an endless stream of people screamed and jumped with joy. That date went swimmingly well too...and we're waiting to hear about date number two.

Project number three is in the works—both guy and girl are just waiting for the time, time and place. We're thinking Friday, 7 p.m., Greenbelt 3.

Matchmaking agency

My friends and I have marveled at the success of our matchmaking scheme. We've jokingly considered putting up a matchmaking agency as we can actually charge for the service. We won't just set people up, we can even help plan their date. That's what we did for our friend—it was like an entire office had been set to narrate, with our person checking the movie schedules, one person reciting off menu suggestions and others figuring out what he should wear.

Matchmaking is a combination of skill, luck and timing. Helping people find romance is a huge rush. There is something magical about seeing two people happy together and knowing that you helped bring them there. I'm glad my high school matchmaker did not end my career as a matchmaker.

And if we do decide to put up a matchmaking business, my first step is to make sure our contract has one clause: I am not asking for anyone's keys back.

ILLUSTRATION POSSIBLE

So you want to set your friends up?

Here are some tips

1 KEEP ONE WORD IN mind—compatibility. Will they like each other? Are there things they can talk about? Do they have similar passions? Are there things they would enjoy doing together? Most importantly, would they connect?

2 It helps to know that one person is adorably into the other person. That lessens your risk of failure by 50 percent.

3 Start small. Don't plan an elaborate dinner or an out-of-town trip. Keep things light at first. A coffee date is ideal. They can get out of it quickly if they wish, or it can turn into hours of fun—and perhaps even dinner—if they hit it off.

4 Know when to back off. But, you helped bring them together. But, no, they are not puppets in your frisky theater of romance. Set the dating machine in motion and know when to let it move on its own course.

5 No pressure. Sure, you think they're perfect for each other. But what if they aren't? Don't pester your friends (more) when to give up and move on to your other friends.

How I met your Mommy

Text and photos by Mon Guinto
Life's Contributor

DEAR SARAH, MATTEO AND SEBASTIAN:

You might be wondering how your newly goofy dad ended up with your cool mother. When you think about it, we seemed doomed never to bump into each other.

Back then I was a busy aviation drone clocking in 14-hour workdays, which left me little time to go out. An alone most new people. And I felt nothing strong with those few women challenging and I relished the recognition that came with all my small triumphs.

Then, I figured, love could wait. In any case, I threw myself at the mercy of the time: it will happen if it was meant to happen.

One March day in 1996, I was at work when a friend I hadn't heard from since college called me inquiring about his friend's mother's account. After going through his questions, we updated each other on our lives.

Out of the blue, he asked if I wanted to be set up with his friend who had just gotten out of a seven-year relationship. I was a bit hesitant because the last blind date I tried didn't go too well. It was with a cute doctor whose first question to me was, "Hi! It's nice to finally meet you. Where do you leave?" That pretty much killed it for me.

I told my friend I was open to it but I simply didn't have time to go on a date at the moment. So, I just got the girl's phone number, thanked my friend, hung up, and pretty much forgot about it.

Extremely nervous

Fast forward to June 1996. I was on the last few days of my two-week vacation when I suddenly ran out of things to do. I remembered my friend's blind date offer and decided to call the girl. After engaging in some chit-chat (and making sure her pronunciation was spot-on), I asked her on "first" and "dinner," he answered, we set a time for dinner. Since we both had not eaten in Italian, we agreed it would be a good time to try it out.

On the night of the big date, I made sure I picked her up early. I was extremely nervous for a couple of reasons. Her father being in the military (images of the cliff sergeant in "Full Metal Jacket" kept looping in my mind) was my first concern. Thankfully, he didn't seem out to greet me.

My next worry was how my date, whom I had never seen, would look like. She sounded nice on the phone, so I hoped that somehow the power voice came with a matching pretty face. Again, this was dispelled when she came out in her blue-green gingham blouse and black shorts. Before me, it looks better than it sounds. She was a cutie!

In the car, I popped my killer date tape and proceeded to dazzle her with my wit. At the restaurant, I got so excited I kept clogging my throughout (not to mention my tongue). I must have gone to the bathroom eight times to take a leak (by the time my number two I had become a morning guy).

After dinner, I took her to a birthday party thrown by one of my friends. Now this was counter to the opinion of my panel of advisers (a.k.a. close girlfriends) who unanimously said that bringing my date to a party was premature.

Meeting the gang was akin to meeting the family, and a first date might not be the most appropriate time to do so. For me, it might make my date feel out of place. Or it might send the wrong signal. In any case, I felt that my friends should meet her. At least so they'd believe me when I told them I had such a great blind date.

Don't knock blind dates—that's how this guy found the love of his life

Good timing

Our date didn't end there. From the party we went to El Jardin for more dancing, then transferred to Cable Car for more drinks.

We arranged for a bowling date soon after. There a movie date. Then another dinner date. And another. Fourteen days after our blind date, I became her boyfriend and was allowed to hold her hand.

I must have done something right, because 12 years later, we're still dating (we got married in 2001).

During our first-ever dinner in Italian(!), your mother and I realized that we could have met so many times prior to our date. She studied in the all-girl's school next to mine. We had parties and soirees with access to her level. She lived two blocks away from my grandmother's house in Malabon. We had a lot of common friends. Her mom worked with my dad's accounting deals.

But I figure that if I had met her earlier, we probably would not have ended up together. She would still have been with her then-boyfriend, and I probably would not have been mature enough to manage a relationship.

I guess we were blessed with good timing.

When I say that love just happens, believe it. And when your friends ask you if you would like to go on a blind date, go for it. Well, provided you're at least 23 years old.

Love,
Dad

Blogs for shutterbugs

From page E1

the clumsy and disappointment of Polaroid fans worldwide. Sonnics have surfaced in cyberspace to pay tribute to those iconic white-bordered instant photos.

Quite expectedly you'll find lots of assorted Polaroids in this blog: snapshots of family, friends, relatives, strangers, places, pets, inanimate objects, nature, food and a lot of abstract art and randomness.

There are also some pros on sterile Polaroid collections and displays. From time to time, entries from users sharing personal Polaroid stories, asking for tips or selling extra cameras also appear. The Polaroid community can be heaved for endorsers with the arrival of digital photography, but the love for this icon will always be around, thanks to sites like this.

Underwater Photography

http://community.livejournal.com/uw_photo/

For underwater photographers, marine enthusiasts, snorkel fanatics and scuba divers, this community blog is a treasure chest inside a sunken ship.

It overflows with excellent-quality pictures of various sea creatures: moray eels, hammerhead sharks, jellyfishes—you name it, it's here.

While the site is mainly in German, most entries have English descriptions and translations. But it's not as if you need to read the captions. The amazing photos are reason enough to visit the site. The type of camera used and the location (including the Philippines!) are also mentioned in entries.

SCREENCAP from http://community.livejournal.com/uw_photo

E-mail the author at mmorkubbin@yahoo.com

Watch her unfold

Japanese-American Marié Digby sings the heartaches of teenage life

By Adrian H. Dy
INQ Correspondent

'Unfold'
Marié Digby
Hollywood Records
(12 tracks)

Almost every bartender has a Wallet Experienced Ma-no-ey, see Malicious Digby.

You're familiar, I'm sure, with the guitar-playing girl next door/the one who's sort of sparse and unassuming, who occasionally does wicked covers of songs when prompted or at an karaoke party or at an engagement?

She's the girl who's dancing by clipboards, has the soul of a priest and one day you'll realize, has the beauty to match her killer set of pipes.

In many ways, Digby is the girl next door who made it big.

Half-Japanese and half-Australian, she managed to land in the limelight after winning the Pinatubo Pyro-fuse contest in 2004, **with a song that would have wound up on her major label debut (Miss Invisible).**

She bounced around with several record labels after that, first with a Universal Music subgroup, then with Disney until she finally landed with Hollywood Records, which proceeded to pocket on their backbones.

YouTube

In a bid to draw attention to herself, Digby began posting cover versions of famous songs on YouTube. The plan worked as Juan flocked to subscribe to her channel and befriend her on MySpace. Hollywood Records soon now convinced that it had a hit maker.

First up was a studio version of her cover of Rihanna's "Umbrella."

Despite a glut of covers covering the rnb track, Digby's version managed to stand out, layering bits of digital cuppa on iTunes, and getting air time on the MTV reality show "The Hills."

Now comes her debut album "Unfold." Say what you will about female singer-songwriters being a dime a dozen, but this solid debut definitely stands out.

Her first original single, "Say It Again," is a ray of sunshine in a pop music scene that's gone to hell in a handbasket with Britney's meltdown and Lindsay's latest.

It is a way Digby is a throwback to yesteryear. The overall package is a pure one, wholesome without being saccharine. Not only are her songs produced in such a way that her voice and her lyrics are emphasized, Digby is not above to go cavorting around in a Catwing in some late night club like some other poors.

Her sultry chick Digby produces some amazing, radio-friendly tracks, she also provides hope.

She is living proof that you don't have to compromise who you are, or lose 80 percent of your flesh to make it big on MTV, one hots that are made to the core of those girls next door.

'Viva La Vida'
Coldplay
Capitol Records (12 tracks)

Can one realistically be the second coming of anything while the first version is still active?

It's no secret that Coldplay is constantly wedding on the lines scope of U2, but in this album, Chris Martin and the rest of the band decide to grow a new scheme and refuse to tone their song writing.

While the new might forget to applaud useful awareness or any attempts at controversy, the message is apt to be lost and ignored when one cannot properly.

Utterly bells, organic, Spanish guitars and Martin sounding more like a man and less like a catwalk make this a very different-accounting Coldplay album, compared to its previous efforts.

In a sense, that is the band completely embracing the comparisons with U2. Therein lies the problem. If you can stay awake despite almost every track's attempt to lull you into a drunken, the cheesy lyrics will do you in.

The closest you will get to vintage Coldplay is the title track "Viva La Vida" with its Jerusalem bells singing and lo, Jesse calling Martin. It's underwhelming, but a standout track otherwise unremarkable album.

While it's usually the case to recommend poor efforts be an established band to only their hardcore fans, I prescribe the opposite for this album.

If you love "Yellow," or "Clocks" or "Speed of Sound," mix, don't walk, in the opposite direction, away from this album.

If you're new to this whole Coldplay thing though, you'd find more things out there right now and this album isn't that bad if you pre-are it as a possible 1/2 or Radiohead clone.

Just keep in mind there are happier times and books in this band's parables, and U2 is still making music if that's the direction you want to be going toward.

The country's best music video

'Beautiful Girl' by Jose Mari Chan...anyone?

By Nino Mark M. Sabio
INQ Correspondent

Link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOILnUUbLc

Search: Beautiful Girl Jose Mari Chan with Regine Velasquez etc.

NAMING THE COUNTRY'S best music video can be a challenge.

You can go by the popular vote and say it's "Huling El Bimbo" by the Eraserheads, or be biased and simply nod "Ngayy Kumbinsing Pero" by Donna Cruz.

Then again, you can opt for the vibrant and high-tech videos of the newly-minted Sexbomb for "Bara" or "Delicious," or just silence any of the hilarious ones from Parokya ni Edgar.

One video that should definitely be among the country's best is Jose Mari Chan's "Beautiful Girl."

It doesn't have a socially relevant plot or major use of impressive digital effects, but it accomplishes one feat. It includes in one video the country's most in-demand female celebrities.

Shot and shown during the early '90s, the video stars only the sophisticated Cherie Gil being serenaded by a young and slim Jose Mari Chan. He moves on to Sheryl Cruz, one of the most famous love stars of that era.

Next are a big-haired Sharon Cuneta, Regine Velasquez and Ate Shar Ai Sesame, Vilma Santos, who is pushed in an ugly black-and-silver number misses her signature lanky.

The cutest lady featured is Snehia Aghayani, the brown-skinned beauty who gained fame for her Playboy shot.

The interesting thing is instead of a smaller shot with Chan, the actress is shown only in a video clip.

This elicits some questions. Was she really part of the cast? Why didn't she make it to the shoot? Why was her video clip incorporated even if it kind of destroyed the flow of the whole music video? Why was she included in the video when Superstar Nora Aunor and stars of the New Decade Marilyn Reynes were not?

After Aghayani's video clip, the rest of the girls (except Sheryl) make another appearance. Cherie (who has changed into a white dress with black dots, plus a strand of pearls) crosses inside the bedroom.

Regine Bares her fashion style by changing into a white polo complete with shoulder pads and a red vest.

Ate Shawie has a hearty meal with Juan Mari, while Ate Vi cuddles with the singer on a couch.

All beautiful girls, yes, but the video ends with a picture of the singer and the number one beautiful girl in his life...his wife, Imeria.

For a trip down memory lane and to appreciate just how melodic music was back in those days, watch this music vid. Then you can go back to figuring out what the country's best music video is.

What music video do you love, hate or love to hate? E-mail the author at nino.markmabio@yahoo.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Edgar Brenzie G. Velarde

Zap unwanted hair on BIKINI LINES with LaserLight!

Cinemalaya goes international

Foreign festival programmers express interest in local digital tilt

HAPPY PARTY Today is the birthday of "Monster Mom's" daughter-dearest. The party was held on Saturday. That's a P 60,000 evening bag she's carrying. More pics Page F6.

By Rayan San Diego Jr.

THE CINEMALAYA PHILIPPINE Independent Film Festival, now in its fourth year, is "gradually being recognized as an important cinema event by programmers abroad," says Nestor Jardin, president of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

"I'm not thrilled that these women (who) a growing interest in Cinemalaya among foreign festival directors," Jardin notes.

Dodo Dimalanta, Asian Cinema programmer of the Vesoul International Film Festival, was chosen as awards with Cinemalaya filmmakers and watch their works at the CCP last week, reports Tina Paterno, Cinemalaya coordinator and organizing committee member.

Dimalanta visited Manila three weeks before Cinemalaya's opening because he couldn't make it on the festival's actual run next month (July 11 to 20), explains Paterno.

Other foreign programmers have similarly expressed interest to the local digital tilt. Jardin provided keynote Entertainment, with a list of the expected guests from abroad.

Apart from Nestor, representatives of the Pusan, Toronto, Jakarta, Rotterdam, Hubert and Berlin festivals are in communication with Cinemalaya officers.

In press time, among those who have confirmed participation are: Orlo Mac Tavner of FORBIG (International Federation of Film Critics); Elec Jr. Desk of Pusan; Michael Pitchaninthagoon of

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3 KUNG FU PANDA	8 Indadtine: HUGOT
4 THE HOTTIE and THE NOTTIE	9 MADE OF HONOR
5 SEXSIS	10 THE CHRONICLES of NARNIA 2

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METRO EAST

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2 ALTERED	6 THE INCREDIBLE HULK
3 THE CHRONICLES of NARNIA 2	7 KUNG FU PANDA
4 THE HOTTIE and THE NOTTIE	8 SEXSIS

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1 MADE of HONOR	3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK
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3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
4 21	

DASMARIÑAS

1 MADE of HONOR	
2 GET SMART	
3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
4 SEX and the CITY	

IMUS

1 MADE of HONOR	
2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
3 GET SMART	
4 URDUJA	

ANGELES

1 MADE of HONOR	3 SEX and the CITY
2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	4 GET SMART

STARMILLS

1 KUNG FU PANDA	6 GET SMART
2 CARE GIVER	6 SEX and the CITY
3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	6 DECEPTION

BACOLOD

1 MADE of HONOR	
2 THE CHRONICLES of NARNIA 2	
3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
4 GET SMART	
5 SEX and the CITY	
6 PATHOLOGY	

ILOILO

1 KUNG FU PANDA	
2 SEX AND THE CITY	
3 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
4 GET SMART	
5 HAROLD AND KUMAR	
6 MADE of HONOR	

Rudy Fernandez film retrospective

FILIPINO movie cable channel Cinema One is currently showcasing until June 27 a retrospective of movies starring the late action star Rudy Fernandez. Showing today is "Ring Lacson: Super Cop," a movie on then Police General Ronlla Lacson. Tomorrow, Rudy portrays Major Jack Morales in "Pahalan." On June 27, Rudy will be seen with Rufa Mae Quinto in "Hala Ako, Hali Ka." All screenings at 9 p.m.

At the Cinemas

GLORIETTA 1	1 GET SMART	2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	3 SPEED RACER	4 THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE
GLORIETTA 4	1 GET SMART	2 MADE OF HONOR	3P THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
	4 THE HAPPENING	5 KUNG FU PANDA	6 THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE	7 THE HAPPENING
GREENBELT 1	1 GET SMART	2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK		
GREENBELT 3	1P THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE	2P GET SMART		
	3 KUNG FU PANDA	4 MADE OF HONOR	5 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1P GET SMART	2 THE INCREDIBLE HULK		
	3 MADE OF HONOR	4 KUNG FU PANDA	5 THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 GET SMART	2 MADE OF HONOR	3 KUNG FU PANDA	4 THE INCREDIBLE HULK
MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	2 KUNG FU PANDA		
	3P THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE	4 MADE OF HONOR	5 GET SMART	
TRINOMA	1 THE HOTTIE & THE NOTTIE	2 THE HAPPENING	3 KUNG FU PANDA	4 MADE OF HONOR
	5 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	6 THE INCREDIBLE HULK	7P GET SMART	

At the Malls

Ayala Malls

- Glorietta — BELLYFEST — June 28, Glorietta Activity Center
- Greenbelt — SATURDAY JAZZ NIGHTS AT GREENBELT 3 — June 21, 7:30pm-9:30pm
- Alabang Town Center — Xbox Tour Fan Promo — June 11 – July 15, Walkway
- Ayala Center Cebu — Big Brother Big Four Meet Fans — June 28, 2PM, Activity Center
- Market! Market! — SM3 Madness — June 28-29, Activity Center
- Cinemalaya — CINEMALAYA — The perfect spot for romantic staycations & corporate events in one accepting bookings for June to July 2008. For inquiries & bookings, pls. call 733-7462 or 747-0961
- Ayala Museum — Explore: Visions of Heroes On Earth — ongoing until 4th June. For more information, please call 757-7117 to 21 local 29 or email museum_project@yahoo.com.ph
- Tri Noma — Music Label Sampling Series 4 @ 1 to 7 — June 28, 4PM, Trilliana Activity Center
- MTV Upbeat — June 28-27, Trilliana Activity Center

Opening This Week

Serbis

Stars Gina Pareño, Jaclyn Jose, Coco Martin, Julio Diaz, Gutierrez King

Directed by Brillante Mendoza

A desperate family lives in a sex-driven theater where nude prostitutes ply their trade. The country's entry in the Main Competition of this year's Cannes International Film Festival, this indie movie attained movement recognition from critics. Howard Feinstein of Screen Daily thinks Mendoza "has taken a giant step in the wrong direction."

Maggie Lee of The Hollywood Reporter differs: "Mendoza displays marked improvement."

The Hottie and the Nottie

Stars Paris Hilton, Joel Moore, Christine Lakin, Adam Kulbersh

Directed by Tom Putnam

Hottie (Hilton) challenges a lovesmack novel (Moore) to find a date for her countercute best friend (Lakin).

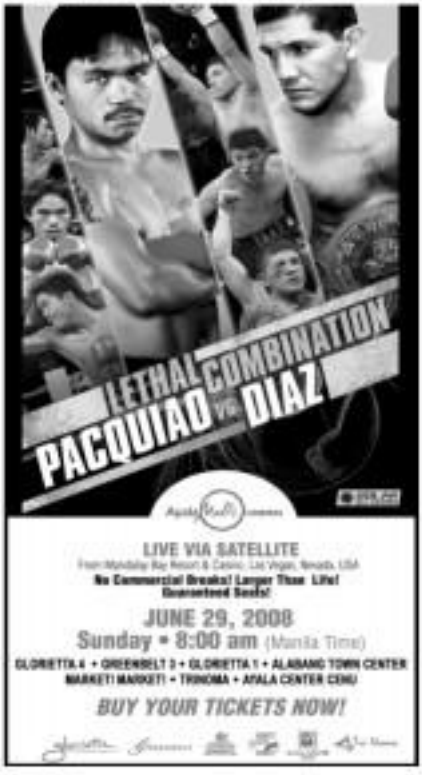
David Jenkins of Time Out London calls it a "E-grade exposition geraldine mumblegloring in a easy disposable chick movie." Peter Travers of Rolling Stone points out: "It takes guts [for Hilton] to appear senseless again after 'House of Wax.'" Jessica Garavello of New York Times thinks it's "insecure-designed for its wrinkling star."

Wanted

Stars Angelina Jolie, James McAvoy, Morgan Freeman, Terence Stamp

Directed by Timur Bekmambetov

Barely out a comic book series by Mark Millar and JG Jones, this action flick follows an account manager (McAvoy) who discovers his dad is an assassin. Michael Rechtshaffen of The Hollywood Reporter describes it as "bloody audacious ... over-the-top." Todd McCarthy of Variety says it "devilishly spin the wire." Luke T. Thompson of LA Weekly concurs: A "cross between 'Fight Club' and 'The Matrix' ... 2/10 (some fun)."



Amy Winehouse has lung damage

LONDON—SOUL DIVA AMY WINEHOUSE has damaged her lungs by smoking crack cocaine and cigarettes, her father said in an interview published Sunday.

The Sunday Mirror quoted Mitch Winehouse as saying that Amy has early stage emphysema and an irregular heartbeat, and has been warned that she will have to wear an oxygen mask unless she stops smoking drugs.

"The doctors have said that if she goes back to drugs, it won't just ruin her voice; it will kill her," added Winehouse said.

Amy, 24, collapsed at her north London home Monday after signing autographs for a group of fans and was taken to a London hospital for tests. She remained there all week.

DRUGS could ruin her voice

Cinemalaya...

From page F1

Toronto, David Oven, project executive (Cultural Exchange) of the Asia-Europe Foundation; Lulu Rivera and Monty Hermoyo Fedman of Jakarta; Robert Malengreau of the Belgian Independent Film Festival; Ningza Voght of Berlin; and Gudjon Zulfikal of Reykjavik.

Jacobe says at least four festival programmers are expected.

Growing viewership

"They are coming in to see the competition and exhibition films to select titles for their forthcoming festivals," Jacobe points out. "Some of them will act as jury members; others as panelists in the Cinemalaya Independent Film Congress."

In terms of viewership, Jacobe says, the festival has grown "by leaps and bounds, from 8,000 viewers in the first year to 23,000 last year."

In terms of quality, the lineup has vastly improved, too, says Tonyboy Cuenco, chair of the Cinemalaya Foundation.

"I'm excited to watch this year's batch," he says.

Email: lopezcinema@hotmail.com

Dingdong's drinks of choice

By Inquirer and Inquirer.net
Entertainment Staff

FROM THE MAIL: "DINGDONG! Dantes is the new face and body of San Mig Light." This is a perfect fit.

Dingdong is a beer connoisseur, by his own admission. Whenever he's anywhere else in the world, he told us earlier, he can't wait to sample the local beers. Where he didn't say. Beer isn't his only drink of choice. He's also the new endorsers of Dim Matcha/Brandy, former the cause displays on "Dyesebel"?

RUSHES

Unsavvy purchase

LAS VEGAS—They're not traditional bedrooms, but Lizzy Richland's can a tri-divisual family.

Actor Nicole Hsieh's former boyfriend spent nearly $3,000 at a celebrity auction Saturday accepting up lingerie once worn in a Playboy shoot by the late playmate.

Richland said he is trying to make sure his 1-year-old daughter, Dannielynn, has something to remember her mother by. AP

Two sides now

In San Angeles, California, a pensioner has filed a $3.5-million lawsuit against Woody Harrelson, accusing the actor of breaking his video camera and smashing him two years ago. Josh Levine said the actor broke his video camera, dashed him and ordered a bodyguard to attack him.

In nearby Malibu, another pensioner, the one trying to photograph Matthew McConaughey at the beach, told police he was attacked by a mob of natives who threw his camera in the ocean on Saturday. McConaughey was not involved in the attack, authorities said. AP

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's gabfests on TV (And why were we moved, if we are moved.):

•Sunday, on season after get pregnant and had an abortion:

"This is so personal. I'm 42 but I still have my periods and maybe want also my hard, hard sense of dynamic urethra..." (As too much information!)

•Director Bellamy Blanchea, on why pairs (but Gov. Blanchi connected a friend really) score to "SoPot":

"Okay naman kami. Siguro naman siya na with skinny plastic body pinanood yan. At saka, hindi naman maglalabas yun ng pelikula. Hindi naman yun ang direktor ko." (Okay ngit siya sila?)

•Vandolfo Sanza, on frequent fights with daughter Bella:

"Lagi kaming nag-aaway—every other day. Ano ito, nature namamagat." (Aaway talaga kayo.)

•Bella Cardenas, on the report that Gretchen Barretto's condo unit was declared in a Makati hotel where they had dinner with Papa Fernandez:

"I promised that I wouldn't talk about it but I suppose I go yun sa isang private setting. Hinggalot po kami kung paano kasabay yun sa 'Identity.'" (Hmm, Alfred naman.)

•Jocelyn Abenado, on a statement from... Uly, 'ang ka-lengthy.)

•Gerome Montero, on Mymgard Tinsay-an-ak comment that a "Hazy Idol" restaurant was called "only" for "Malang Talagan":

"Ang daming sa mga nakakakinig, nakamalik niya ang 'Malang Talagan.'" (Oo nga.)

•Myrgard's clarification:

"Hindi ... akong gano'ng nakatingin sa mukha ni German Moreno at ang 'Malang Talagan.'" (Lost in translation!

•Billy Lorenzo, on the announced engagement of Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo:

"Hindi pang-musmos sa akin 'yung chismis. Mayo (Aking lampa!) kasi parang I was Dolly ann... Bakit ito nangyayari sa, syempre, ibang pamilya ako di ba?"

•Carlene Aguilar on whether she still has feelings for Jessie Tillo:

"Hindi na talaga. Boy kung love na akala niya ang daddy ng anak ko, ewan. Ayaw ko rin ako sa walkie niya dyanpan." (Hehe, ibig sabihin ...)

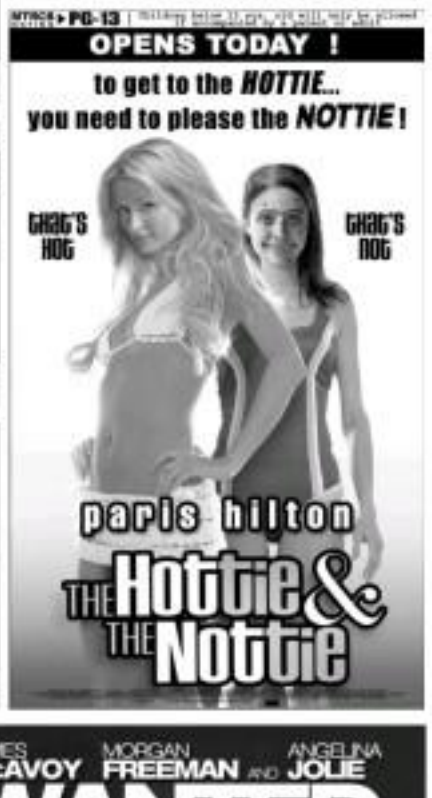
(Dyertalk, Dec Ryan, Showbiz Central)

(E-mail to: mabuti@inquirer.com.ph)

CHEER FACTOR

Gold Camera awardee

QTV-11's "Pinoydy Filipina," hosted by Charlene Gonzalez, was awarded the Gold Camera Award under the Merchandising, Inspirational Production category at the 2005 US International Film and Video Festival, beating 1,300 entries from 23 countries.



Manager defends...

Previous page F2

Cool artist

New artist Mary Roxane sounds as good as she looks. Her music is a fusion of pop rock, reggae, country rock and R&B. Her debut album "Freak," cool yet electrifying, has extensive video to hit music channels soon. Mary is a self-proclaimed "free-downloaded music artist." Log on to www.maryroxane.com. Make way for Emma Stone!

Celebrity night

Members (and non-members) of the Makiling Press Club are invited to join the revelry on Celebrity Night every Friday at the Steadfast Restaurant, SMC Bldg., Intramuros. Guests include PBEd Gonzalez, Carmina Pineda and Ember Ember! MPC wants, and still rock-solid party-party!

PROBE ROSE. Kudos to top brilliant friend Jacquie Bailey, new president of Making Network (Channel 79 on Sky Cable). With Jacquie at the helm, we think it will soon be a station to reckon with.

E-mail scoop to balweberge@yahoo.com

OPPS!

THE LOGO of Cinderella was inadvertently omitted from Dolly Anne Carvajal's June 23 column, "Heartbreak" by Cesar Montano and not Dolly as those interviews and quit link-up took from Direct Marketing Corner.

Manager defends Angel Locsin's topless billboard pose

I WILL NEVER FORGET MARVIN Agustin's birthday surprise to me many months ago. Aware he missed my party, he popped up at the condo said of my swingin' Alabang where I was staying for the weekend. He brought Mars Pan along.

When I met hospitalized recently, Marvin sent me flowers. Every time I make landing for a tour in his country name Manny Ram in Ilocos, El Tino in Guimaras and Ogmar Boy in Cebu), he grants my requests instantly.

Kindness is an everyday thing for him. To paraphrase the title of his new soap, **medalye at mind-long evdaum ang kabutot** of Marvin.

In "Gumuo Kadalan ang Silinsan," he portrays a toxic rain forensic race scientist. "In real life, I'd always choose the one I love than the one who loves me," says Marvin. "I live life to the fullest. I don't wanna spend it with someone I don't love 100 percent."

Could her leading lady Dianne Zobbel be that one for him? "She's a beautiful woman inside out. It's not impossible."

He says sour make everything possible for him to achieve. "They are my strength," he says. "I say one to make my mamma with those especially now, in their formative years. They teach me how good it feels just to love."

With Marvin's super-sized heart, love is all in Ilocos comes naturally.

'I'm realize'

Angel Locsin's manager Becky Aguila sees nothing wrong with Gel's topless billboard shot for Folded & Hung. "The fashion calls for it," Becky explains. "He realizes in the pose it was done with class. It's within the moral parameters of legal being of wholesome endorser."

After "Lalin" wraps up, Angel will fly to Bangkok for a commercial shoot. Then she will have whole therapy for a solid two-of-shipped disc and start shooting her movie with Piolo Pascual in Baldivino and Australia. The endless tinkipers pitting Angel against Marian Rivera like in FHM's sexiest poll is a non-issue, really. Angel's too blessed to be stressed (by controversies).

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Ex-lovers' reunion

It's been Dingdong Avanzado and Rachel Alejandro's besieged trio each other at Stella Gutierrez's birthday party. Did he see his controversial ex Miss Miss Quinta who was also on the list? "Nope, it turns out she's in PCIA. Guess it's not the right time," says Dingdong. Why can't they be friends the way he and Rachel are? "Rachel didn't say anything to harass the friendship. We are planning a reunion. It's fine with Annie as long as Kuwento Ayo Daughter." Could have Piri entered his signals before? "I don't think there was any related signals," he insists. "Only heaven only well why our relationship couldn't go any further. Out of respect for Say I didn't go into details about the matter."

Some things are better left unsaid and unanswered questions are best left unanswered.

First anniversary

Shaddam Lanza is in full bloom. Her love life is rosy and she's been tapped as the new endorser of Dr. Joel Mendiri's Weight Loss Center, Body & Face clinics. "My BF Shawnie (Tanchuling) wants me glow. Mendiri helps me maintain it," she says.

They recently celebrated their first anniversary as lovers. "We had a romantic dinner at Antonio's in Tagaytay."

Does she see herself married to Shawnie anytime soon? "It's too early. We just focus on making each other 'happy'." Shawnie's living in with Lanza!

Long-distance romance

Ria Calzado and her BF Jerry Garcia (who's based in the US) were spotted having a blast at Mahiwaq. They surely have a lot of reasons to celebrate, long-distance romance is never easy. I assure her (ex-telling me once, "We just might end up fighting long months than we're used we don't have enough time for each other when things happen here, we make up for it by calling frequently, in an odd way the distance works to our advantage since we're both busy with our careers." Career in-a-ng pag-ano!

Twice lucky

I bumped into morning couple John Gervacio and Priscilla Meirelles at **Bangel La Mal** on a **movie Sunday**. "She might see this love is lovelier the next time around," beams John. They kept each other warm and enjoyed the "bad-weather" together.

New branch

Karylle is excited that the second branch of Cavanniage family KW is now **open in Jupiter Floor Makati** (909-8885). It's her venture with JR Dingdong Dantes and friends (the original joint is in Timog Circle). Could it signal another venture for Dong and K called marriage?

MANAGER H

Birthday girl, party planner

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE BIRTHDAY SOAP that actress-TV host Stella Gutierrez hosted for 200 guests on Anne day was the first she ever organized for herself.

"It was always mommy [Annabelle Rama] who did that. I was very excited about this one," said Stella, who had some help from events organizer Cynthia Alcantara.

"Stella's second a lounge-party kid, with lots of photo and cameras," said Monette.

The celebration, held at the Blue Leaf in Tagaytay City, was a gift from the Sola Medical Group to its new endorser.

Stella donned a turquoise mini by Rajo Laurel. Her bag, by world-renowned Filipino designer Ben Valdes, reportedly cost P100,000.

"My wish for myself is to continue to be happy and blessed," said the birthday celebrant.

Stella's brothers Raymond and her best friend Bonbon Gon hosted a trivia game. Stella refused to reveal the answer to the question about her relationship with estranged husband Yilmaz Bektas. "That's so corny," she quipped. "New question please."

Married B. Cruz

JOKO MELENDEZ

JOYCE JIMENEZ

VICKI BELO, Philip Salvador and Hayden Kho

DONITA Rose and Raymond Gutierrez

TESSA PRIETO-VALDES

ELMER-MAE CRUZ-MIRANDA

BIRTHDAY celebrator Ysa Ramos Amadeo Rama and Eddie Gutierrez

JOHN ESTRADA and girlfriend Priscilla Meirelles

GENEVA Cruz and Rachel Alejandro

MARCEL Lana and Anthony Pangilinan